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FORTS AND PALACES OF RAJASTHAN

History, Art and Architecture

Sanjeev Kumar Bhasin

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Preface

Rajputana was a tribal state before becoming the dominion of small principalities with the advent of Rajputs who initially settled here as affluent feudal lords and rose to the status of Rajas in recognition of their valour and chivalry during Mughal and British period. They provided military assistance to imperial rulers and commanded their army in many expeditions. They built several hill forts and palaces in Rajasthan. The mud, sun-dried earth bricks and wood were the pre-medieval building materials used in the construction of forts which later replaced with dominating red sandstone. Jaisalmer fort is built of yellow sandstone which the district has in abundance. The use of white marble came into fashion during the reign of Shahjahan who built the Taj Mahal. The modern architecture developed during British period which replaced the Mughal type mansions with the gothic structures. A large number of forts and palaces in Rajasthan have been converted into heritage hotels, a list of which has been added in the end.

The forts, palaces and havelis of Rajasthan embody Mughal-Rajput architecture which developed to a great extent during Mughal period. The forts of Rajasthan have been assaulted several times by Muslim invaders. The strong fort walls are still the mute spectators of the gory past. The forts of Chittaurgarh, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Jalore, Ranthambhor, Bhatner and Siwana have confined in themselves the painful Rajput valour of *jauhar* and *kesaria*. Rana Kumbha, Rana Sanga, Rana Pratap, Rani Padmawati and Meerabai among others are known for their valours, charms and devotions.

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The heroism and lifestyle of Rajput rulers and warriors which manifest in their strongholds fascinated me to write a cohesive study on art and architecture against the political back drop of Rajput monarchy that cast a lively spectrum of events before the eyes. My five years stint at Jaipur gave me an opportunity to travel across the state, sometime touching the remote locations of *maru-bhumi* with no human habitation around for miles. Since I have been serving in a government department hence, the details mentioned in this book are based on my study only.

I am indebted to Shri Chandrakant Govind Rajorkar, Associate Professor, Deptt. of History, Rajasthan University for taking pains in poring over the manuscript and guidng me on the subject matter. I am grateful to my friend, Tej Singh Rathore of Rajasthan Hindi Granth Academy, Jaipur for extending me literary help. I am thankful to my wife, Renu who also read the manuscript as well as travelled with me on couple of occasions and offered valuable suggestions which have been acknowledged appropriately in this book. I am thankful to M. C. Gupta proprietor, Panchsheel Prakashan, Jaipur for taking all pains and interest in the publication of this book in a short time. I hope that this book would offer a detailed description on the subject along with compact political history of Rajput monarchy.

—Sanjeev Kumar Bhasin

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Geo-physical Set-up

Rajasthan is the second largest state of India occupying an area of 3,42,239 sq. km which constitutes 10.41% of the total area of the country. It is situated between 23°03' & 30°12' North latitude and 69°30' & 78°17' East longitude in the north-west part of India. It is bounded by Punjab and Haryana in the north, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh in the south and Uttar Pradesh in the east. Rajasthan touches the international border of 1070 km in length with Pakistan in the north-west out of total state boundary of 5920 km. Munabao railway station is erected on Indo-Pak border in Barmer district which plies Thar Express train between India (Munabao) and Pakistan (Zero Point-Kokhrapar). This rail link was reopened first time after independence in February 2006.

The **Aravalli** mountain range is the significant geographical feature of Rajasthan. It is a crown over the land of Rajasthan. The Aravalli mountain range formed by the sedimentary deposits of the sea is considered older than the Himalayas. The Aravalli range guards the eastern and central region from the sand storm of the west. It passes through Rajasthan from southwest to northeast. It is about 692 km in length from Palanpur (Gujarat) to Delhi dividing the state into northwest and southeast regions. The Aravalli comes down to 50 metres of elevation above ground at Delhi on one end and 60 metres at Palanpur on the other end. The low ridges of Delhi begin to gain height at Alwar and Jaipur where their elevation reaches 792 metres at Bharaich, 704 metres at Bairath in Alwar and 920 metres at Khoh in Jaipur. The range branches off at Raghunathgarh in Sikar at an elevation of 1055 metres. It further splits at Srimadhopur and Neem ka Thana in Sikar district and at Khetri in Jhunjhunu district. It gains height of 873 metres at

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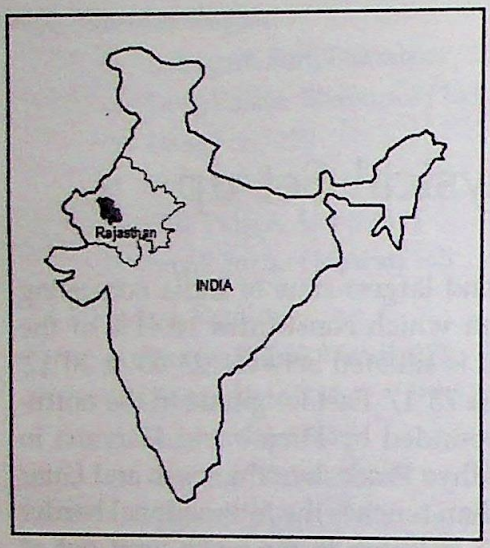

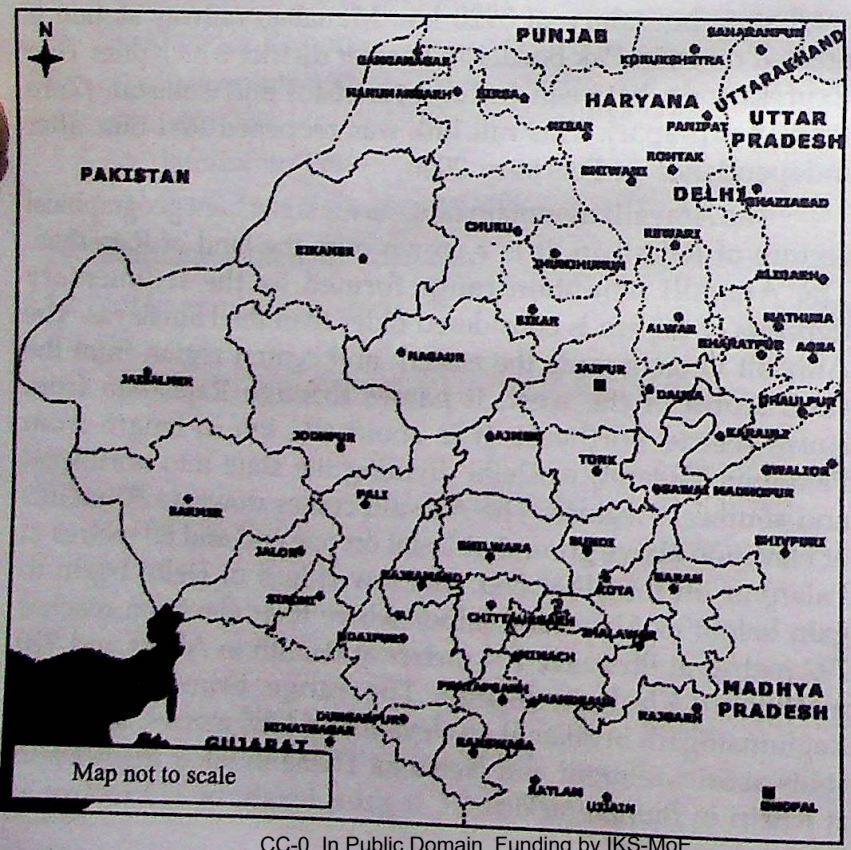

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Ajmer where Taragarh fort is erected. The range further extends to Chittaur at 600 metres elevation and 1727 metres at Guru Shikhar in Mount Abu in Sirohi district and 1090 metres at Gogunda in Udaipur and subsequently touches Dungarpur before entering into southwest region of Gujarat reducing its height to 60 metres. The Aravalli mountains have rich deposits of zinc, copper, mica, marble, granite, yellow stone etc.

Thar, the Great Indian Desert to the west of Aravalli remained under the sea during Perm carboniferous period. The sea receded during Miosence and Plicene periods. It is evident from the smooth rocks and boulders found at Jodhpur, Barmer and Jaisalmer. 58% of the total area of Rajasthan is desert which is spread over an area of 1,20,500 sq. km comprising the districts of Bikaner, Barmer, Jaisalmer, Ganganagar, Nagaur, Churu, Sirohi, Pali, Jalore, Sikar and Jhunjhunu. The small hillocks also appear in the desert at places. The sand dunes shift frequently which sometimes attain height of 300 ft. Thar Desert is spread over an area of 4,46,000 sq. km of which 2,08,110 sq. km fall in India in the states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab and Haryana. The major chunk of it lies in the western Rajasthan. It is bounded by Indus on the west, Sultej in the northwest, Aravalli range in the east and Rann of Kutch in the south. It extends into the territory of Sindh and Punjab provinces of Pakistan in the southeast.

The northwest part of the state produces very little due to low rainfall and arid topography whereas the southeast part has fertile tableland and forest reserves which receive high rainfall. The state has $3/5^{th}$ fertile southeast and $2/5^{th}$ arid sandy northwest. The wells, tube wells, water tanks and canals are the main sources of irrigation in Rajasthan. 63% of irrigation is carried out through wells and tube wells in eastern and southeastern regions where water table is high. The irrigation from water tanks depends on the rainfall. Rajasthan also gets water from Beas project along with Haryana and Punjab. The state has its own irrigation projects like Jawai Project built on Jawai river in Pali district. Gambhiri project built on the Gambhiri river.

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Chambal is the perennial river having length of 966 km. Banas is tributary of Chambal whereas Berach, Kothari, Khari, Dhund and Morel are tributaries of Banas. Banas originates from Aravalli in Kumbhalgarh and passes through Udaipur, Chittaur, Bhilwara, Tonk and Sawai Madhopur. It joins Chambal at Rameshwar in Madhya Pradesh. The river Chambal after originating from Vindhyachal mountain range near Mau in Madhya Pradesh flows to Kota, Bundi and Dholpur. Mahi originates in Madhya Pradesh and flows into Dungarpur and Banswara before entering into Gujarat territory. The Luni comes down from Aravalli of Ajmer and flows to Pali, Jodhpur, Barmer where it joins Sukri and enters Gujarat wherefrom it falls into the sea. Sabarmati streams from the hills of Bhomat area in Mewar and takes its course to Gujarat. Ghaggar river coming from Haryana terminates in the north of Rajasthan where it was known as Saraswati river in early times. Pushkar and Naki Lakes are regarded sacred lakes of the state. The salt lakes of Sambhar, Pachpedra and Deedwana have rich salt deposits. A 649 km long Indira Gandhi canal earlier known as Rajasthan canal was inaugurated on March 31, 1958. It starts from Harike barrage in Punjab and ends at Mohangarh in Jaisalmer district. The water table is available at a depth of 80 metres to 130 metres in the state.

Rajasthan has different types of soils like desert soil, hill soil, alluvial soil, saline soil, dunes soil, brown soil and red loams. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people in Rajasthan which contributes 55 percent to the total state's income. The crops of wheat, maize, cotton, groundnuts, sugarcane, tobacco and oilseeds are grown in southeastern and eastern region. Bajra is grown in sandy soil of western Rajasthan. Jowar and sesame are grown in the eastern part. Cotton accounts for 1-2 percent of the cropped area. Wheat, the chief Rabi crop, is grown on large scale. Gram is raised in eastern and northern parts of the state. Rajasthan is the second largest producer of mustard oil in India and also the country's second largest producer of polyester fibre. Bhilwara has a large textile industry. Millet is grown in the desert region of the state.

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Rajasthan has rich flora and fauna. The state has 5.3% of the total forest area of India. The government has declared most of the forest areas as reserved forest where hunting is prohibited. The forest of Rajasthan lies in the districts of Alwar, Banswara, Bharatpur, Dholpur, Bundi, Chittaurgarh, Jaipur, Kota, Sawai Madhopur, Sirohi and Udaipur. The northwest districts of Nagaur, Pali, Sikar, Jhunjhunu, Ajmer, Jodhpur and Jaisalmer have thorny forest where Khejri, Babul, Kair and thorny trees are grown.

The southeast and northeast parts of Rajasthan have dense forest populated by wild animals including lions, leopards, sambars, deers, antelopes, neelgai etc. The antelope and deer population is more in Bikaner district. The sparrow, pigeon, crow, peacock, parrot, myna, robin can be spotted easily in the state. The great Indian Bustard is the state bird. The snakes and other reptiles like Pivana are found in the desert areas of Jaisalmer and Bikaner. The black buck, chinkara, neelgai, desert fox, cat, jackal and wolf inhabit in northwest and southwest region of the state. The southeast region has population of tiger, leopard, sloth bear, sambar, chital, neelgai, wild boar, chinkara, chosingha, crocodile, garial and alligator. The camel population is higher in Rajasthan than any other state in India. The best known breed of camel available in Rajasthan is Alwari, Bikaneri, Khachhi and Jaisalmeri. Bikaneri breed is being used by Indian army in their cavalry.

The state has four national parks – Ranthambhor National Park in Sawai Madhopur; Keoladeo National Park in Bharatpur; Desert National Park in Jaisalmer; Sariska Tiger Reserve and National Park in Alwar. The wild life sanctuaries are - Darrah Game Sanctuary, 50 km from Kota railway station; Van Vihar Santuary (59.53 sq.km), 29 km southwest of Dholpur; Jaisamand Sanctuary (52 sq.km), 48 km from Udaipur; Mount Abu Sanctuary (289 sq. km) in Abu; Kumbhalgarh Sanctuary (578 sq. km), 25 km from Falna railway station: Tal Chapper sanctuary (71 sq.km), 210 km from Jaipur in Churu district; Sita Mata Sanctuary (422.94 sq.km) in southern Chittaurgarh; National Chambal Sanctuary (280 sq.km), Kota; Jawahar Sagar Sanctuary

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(100 sq.km), Kota; Nahargarh Sanctuary (50 sq.km), Jaipur; Jamwa Ramgarh Sanctuary (300 sq.km) 25 km east of Jaipur; Ramgarh Vishdhari sanctuary (307 sq.km) 35 km north of Kota in Bundi district; Bhainsrodgarh Sanctuary (229.14 sq.km) 53 km from Kota; Keladevi Sanctuary (679.33 sq.km), near Karauli in Sawai Madhopur district; Shergarh Sanctuary (98.71 sq.km), Kota; Todgarh Rawali (495.27 sq.km) in Beawar in district Ajmer; Phulwai ki Nal (511.41 sq.km), near Falna railway station; Sawai Man Singh Sanctuary (103.25 sq.km) near Ranthambhor National Park in Sawai Madhopur district; Band Baratha Sanctuary (192.72 sq.km) at Bayana in Bharatpur; Sajjangarh Santuary (5.19 sq.km) 5 km west of Udaipur; Dhawa (Doli) wild life sanctuary 45 km from Jodhpur on Barmer road. These sanctuaries have a large number of wild animals in rich forest area.

The climate of Rajasthan is arid, semi arid and sub-humid. 57% arid climate prevails over the western region of the state comprising the districts of Jaisalmer, Barmer, Bikaner, Ganganagar, Pali, Churu, Jhunjhunu, Sikar, Nagaur, Jodhpur and Jalore. 37% semi-arid climate is felt in the districts of Alwar, Jaipur, Ajmer, Bharatpur, Tonk, Sawai Madhopur, Bhilwara, Bundi, Kota, Chittaurgarh, Udaipur, Sirohi and Dungarpur. 6% sub-humid climate is experienced in Jhalawar and Banswara in southern Rajasthan. The southwest monsoon brings about the maximum rainfall in the state. The maximum mean temperature remains 38.6 to 42.6 degree celsius in May. However, it is less hot during night due to desert condition. The extreme temperature ranges from -4.4 to 50 degree celsius in western Rajasthan and from -2.8 to 47.8 degree celsius in eastern Rajasthan.

Rajasthan is known for its best marble industry located at Makrana, Abu, Rajsamand, Alwar and Kota. Jaisalmer is famous for yellow stone. The limestone quarries are located at Mandore, Karauli and Chittaurgarh. Granite is found in Jalore.

According to 2011 census, the population of Rajasthan is 6,86,21,012 which constituted 3,56,20,086 males and 3,30,00,926 females that is 926 females per 1000 males. The

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literacy rate is 67.06% (male 85.51% and female 52.66%). The main castes in the state are Rajputs, Brahmins, Vaishyas, Jats, Yadavs, Gujjars and Meenas.

Meenas claimed their origin from Matsya Avtar (Fish God), an incarnation of Lord Vishnu and derived the name Meena from the word Meen (a fish). British government divided Meenas into two categories Zamindar Meenas and Chowkidar Meenas. Zamindar Meenas were landlords whereas Chowkidar Meenas were involved in criminal activities. Chowkidar Meenas were supposed to report at the police chowki from time to time, hence, they were called Chowkidar Meenas. The tribes like Gurjars, Mers and Jats migrated from Punjab and Sindh provinces of present Pakistan and settled in western Rajputana during Greek invasion in 3rd century B.C. The Jats settled at Nagaur, Bikaner and Bharatpur areas while Mers settled in Hadoti and Mewar regions. They established their tribal sovereignty over a vast territory and fought wars against their fellow tribes with primitive weapons.

Thinking of Rajasthan gives a vision of fabulous forts and palaces, bright coloured Rajputani attires, distinct headgears, Kalbeliya dance and the camels on sand dunes. The Ghoomar of Udaipur and Kalbeliya of Jaisalmer are the main folk dances of the state. Besides, Gair dance of Jodhpur and Barmer, Geendad dance of Shekhawati, Dandiya dance of Marwar, Bum dance of Bharatpur, Terah Tali dance by Bhopas of Ramdeoji are also popular folk dances of the state. There are also some tribal dances of the state like Bhil folk dance, Garasia folk dance, Banjara dance, Bhawai dance, Panhari dance, Shankaria dance and Bhagaria dance. The folk songs and music of Rajasthan deliver a variety of melodies lauding the verses of valour, romance and devotion. The natives of Rajasthan wear Dhoti, Lungari, Laharia, Chunari, Safa, Pagree and Angarkhi.

The popular fairs of the state are – Pushkar Fair is held annually at Pushkar near Ajmer together with camel fair. Pushkar is known for only temple of Lord Brahma in the world. Ramdeora fair is held at village Ramdeora village in Pokaran, district Jaisalmer during the month of August-September. The

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fair is dedicated to folk god Ramdeoji. Karni Mata fair is held at Deshnok in Bikaner twice in a year during Navratra festivals. It is dedicated to goddess Karnimata. The popular fairs of Sheetla Mata are held at Jodhpur and Jaipur (Chaksu) during the month of March-April. Kaila Devi fair is held at Kaila in Karauli district during the month of March-April and is dedicated to Kaila Devi (goddess Bhawani). Baneshwar fair is held in village Navatapara, tehsil Ashapur, district Dungarpur and is dedicated to Lord Shiv. Jambewar fair is held at village Mukam in Nokham district Bikaner twice a year. It is dedicated to Jamboji, the founder of Bishnoi sect. Gogaji fair is held at village Gogamedi in Nohar, district Hanumangarh. It is dedicated to folk god Gogaji who is worshipped for protection from poison of snake bite.

The Rajasthani dialect changes after every 50 km. Rajasthani dialects are Marwari, Mewari, Dhakri, Bikaneri, Shekhawati, Kheradi and Godawari (spoken in western region), Aheerwati and Mewati (spoken in north-east region), Dundhari, Torawati, Khodi, Jaipur, Kathedi, Nagarchal and Hadoti (spoken in eastern region), Rangadi and Sandhuvadi (spoken in south-east region), Nimari and Bhili (spoken in southern region).

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Rajputana – A Brief History

Rajputana predominantly a tribal state inhabited by Meenas and Bhils tribes until subjugated by Rajputs who established various dynasties in Rajputana. The word 'Rajput' is composed of two words 'Raj-put' which originated from Sankrit word 'Raj-putra', literally means the son of the Raja or King. Rajputana similarly denotes the meaning of land or region of the king. Rajputs were the earliest Kshatriya rulers who initially settled as feudatory chiefs in Rajputana. They fought and won battles for Mughals who in turn, bestowed upon them the title of Raja. Hence, the Rajputs belonged to the ruling class which later became the social class. It is commonly believed that Rajputs trace their descent from the progeny of sun, moon and fire. The popular epics of *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat* gave birth to Solar race (*Suryavanshi*) and Lunar race (*Chandravanshi*) respectively. *Suryavanshi* claimed their descent from the descendants of Lord Ram while *Chandravanshi* traced their descent from Lord Krishan. The Sacred Fire-pit race (*Agnivanshi*) emerged later who claimed their origin from the sacrificial fire of *Yagya* (sacred rituals by lighting fire in the pit) performed by a group of Rishis (Seers) on Mount Abu in southern Rajasthan. According to tradition, Rishi Vashishth created warriors - Pratiharas, Chalukyas, Parmaras and Chauhans from this Fire pit to rescue a Kamdhenu cow. Chandbardai, a poet in the court of Raja Prithviraj Chauhan, wrote about *Agnivanshi* Rajputs in his book *Prithviraj Raso*. He mentioned that Rishi Vishwamitra, Gautam and Agast were performing *Yagya* on Mount Abu where the demons were putting hindrances in successful completion of their rituals. Rishi Vashishth created the above warriors from the Sacred Fire pit to ward off the demons from the ritual site.

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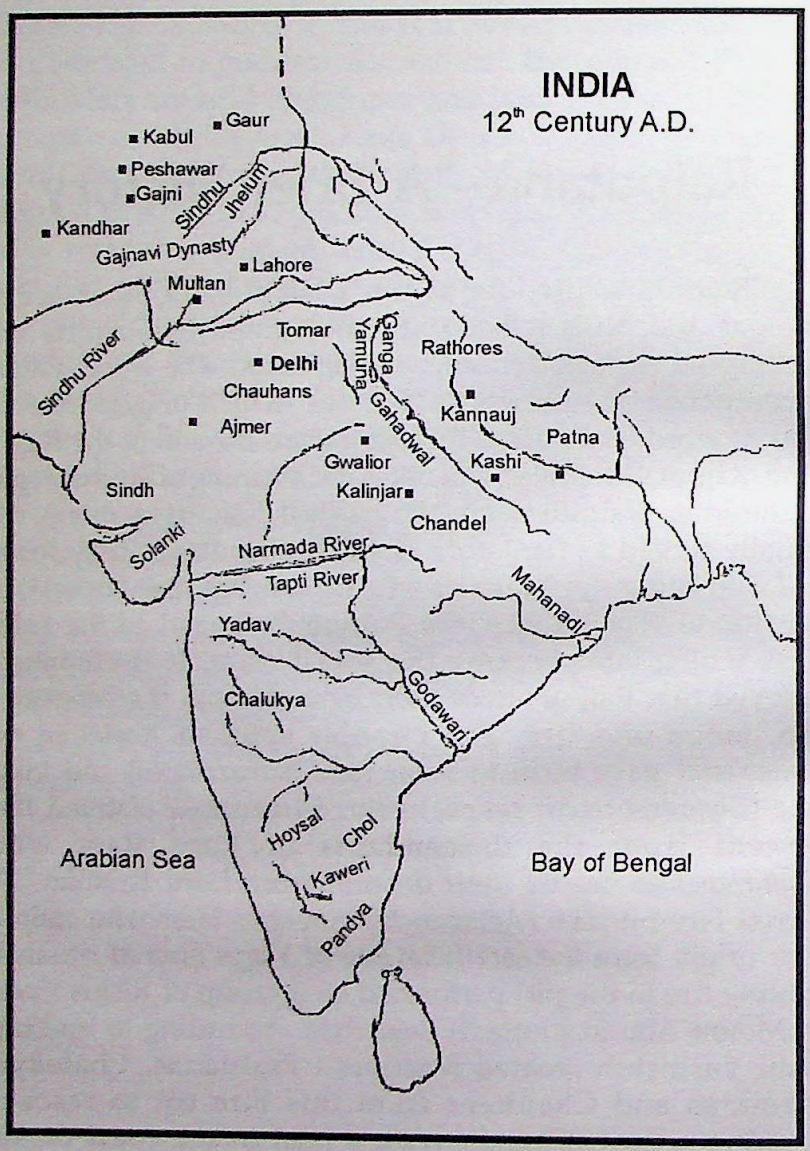

The historians and thinkers like Col. James Todd, J. Campbell, Badan Powell, William Crooke among others believed in the theory of foreign origin of Rajput race. According to the theory, the invasions of Greeks, Scythians, Parthians, Sakas, Kushanas and Hunas on India transformed the early social and cultural set up of human habitation in India. Some

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of the foreign invaders settled here and adapted to the Indian traditions. Col. Todd held the views that Rajputs traced their line of descent to the foreign races of Sakas, Kushanas and Hunas. G.H. Ojha expressed similar views by stating that Rajputs found their origin from the merger of Sakas, Scythians, Kushanas and Hunas races. As such, Chandragupt Maurya belonging to Panwar clan was married to the daughter of Seleucos Nikator. Rudradaman of Saka race married off his daughter to Satavahan prince. The foreign origin of Rajputs also coincided with the arrival of Aryan in Indus valley from Central Asia who later spread in rest of India. Some settled in the northern part of Rajasthan. They were followed by other foreign tribes who altogether adapted to Indian culture and tradition. The legends of *Mahabharat* and *Ramayan* played an important role in shaping their religious and political pursuit.

J.N. Asopa has expressed his own views on the origin of Rajput clans by relating them to the geography rather than mythology. He has connected the Panwars with Pragvata or Pouroral of Ptolemy extending on both sides of Aravalli near Abu. Chalukayas or Salukyas with river Saiki originating from Khondmals hills in Orissa. Gurjar Pratihars (Juzrs) with river Jozri flowing below Merta and Jodhpur. Chauhans or Sambharia Chauhans with Sambhar lake of Rajasthan. Guhils with the guhila (forest) territory lying between river Guhia and river Mahi, and so on.

Rajputs gave birth to various dynasties during the period from 648 AD to 1206 AD, known as Rajput period in the Indian history. The important Rajput dynasties have been the Guhils & Sisodias of Mewar; the Kachhawas of Amber; the Rathores of Marwar; the Hadas of Hadoti; the Bhatis of Jaisalmer; the Shekhawats of Shekhawati; and the Chauhans of Ajmer.

The **Pratihar** Rajputs reigned over the western part of India comprising the territory of Saurashtra, Kathiawad, Jodhpur and Ujjain during 6th century AD. They expanded their territory upto Kannauj in Uttar Pradesh and ruled over northern India. Pratihars defeated Gurjars of Jalore and earned the epithet of Gurjar Pratihars. They traced their origin from

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the descendants of Laxman, the younger brother of Lord Ram. While others connected their line of descent to Raja Harishchandra, a Brahmin who was married to Kshatriya woman named Bhadra. The Pratihar dynasty was dislodged by Rashtrakut rulers of Deccan in 8th century. The *Agnivanshi* **Chauhans** emerged during 12th century and established Sapadalksha kingdom comprising territories of Jaipur, Ranthambhor, Ajmer, Kishangarh, part of Mewar and Bundi. Guhils, later knowns as **Sisodias** migrated to Rajasthan from Gujarat in 7th century and ruled over Mewar comprising the territories of Udaipur, Chittaur, Bhilwara, Rajsamand, Banswara and Dungarpur. Rana of Mewar claimed their descent to Lav, the son of Ram. **Rathores** of Marwar claimed their descent to Kush, the second son of Ram; whereas some believed that they originated from the son of Vishwamitra. Rathores migrated from Kannauj to Pali and ruled over Marwar comprising the territories of Jodhpur, Pali, Sirohi, Jalore, Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Hanumangarh, Nagaur and Ganganagar. **Kachhawas** migrated from Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh to Rajputana during 10th century and captured Dundhar from Meena chieftains which comprised the territories of Sawai Madhopur, Tonk, Jaipur, Dausa and Karauli. *Chandravanshi* **Bhatis** migrated from Punjab and settled at Jaisalmer after being ousted by Turks in 12th century. They established their small kingdom at Jaisalmer. **Shekhawat** dynasty ruled the state known as Shekhawati which comprised the present Sikar, Churu and Jhunjhunu districts. **Hada** dynasty ruled over Hadoti region comprising the states of Kota, Bundi and Jhalawar. Dholpur and Bharatpur were ruled by **Jats**. The brief details about these dynasties have been given region-wise in the following chapters.

All the princely states of Rajputana except Maharana Pratap of Mewar acknowledged the supremacy of Mughal rulers. After the death of Maharana Pratap, Mewar also became vassal of Mughal Empire. Rajput rulers of Udaipur, Jodhpur and Jaipur entered into marital relations with Mughal rulers. After the collapse of Mughal Empire, Marathas raided

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Rajputana number of times and imposed tributes on its rulers. Rajputs contracted a treaty with British government which protected the state from Marathas adversaries.

Formation of Rajasthan

India got freedom from the imperial rule on August 15, 1947. The democratic change had weakened the monarchy in Rajputana which was primarily depended on British government. The people also wanted freedom from monarchy and feudal system. Consequently, the princely states of Rajputana merged into a single larger state of Rajasthan which joined the Union of India on March 30, 1949. The State has 25 Parliamentary Constituencies and 200 Assembly Constituencies.

Firstly, the Matsya Union comprising the states of Alwar, Bharatpur, Dholpur and Karauli was formed on March 18, 1948. It was followed by formation of United Rajasthan on March 25, 1948 comprising the states of Banswara, Dungarpur, Pratapgarh, Kota, Bundi, Jhalawar, Kishangarh, Shahpura and Tonk. The ruler of Kota was appointed Rajpramukh while Gokul Lal Asawa took over as the Prime Minister. Later, Mewar also joined the United Rajasthan on April 18, 1949 and Udaipur was made its capital. Maharana of Udaipur was made the Rajpramukh. Bikaner, Jodhpur and Jaipur also merged into Rajasthan on January 14, 1949. Maharaja Sawai Man Singh of Jaipur was appointed Rajpramukh of Greater Rajasthan and Jaipur was made the capital. Hira Lal Shastri was elected leader of Congress Party and took over as Chief Minister of Rajasthan. On May 15, 1949, the Matsya Union merged into Rajasthan. Ajmer was administered by a Chief Commissioner until it was merged into Rajasthan on November 1, 1956.

Presently, Rajasthan consists of 33 districts - Ajmer, Alwar, Banswara, Barmer, Bhilwara, Baran, Bundi, Bharatpur, Bikaner, Chittaurgarh, Churu, Dausa, Dholpur, Dungarpur, Hanumangarh, Jaipur, Jalore, Jhalawar, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Jhunjhunu, Kota, Karauli, Nagaur, Pali, Pratapgarh, Rajsamand, Sawai Madhopur, Sriganganagar, Sikar, Sirohi, Tonk and Udaipur. Pratapgarh became the 33rd district of

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Rajasthan on January 26, 2008 which was carved out of Chittaurgarh, Udaipur and Banswara districts. Before its formation, it was part of Chittaurgarh district situated in the southeastern part of Rajasthan.

These districts have been placed under the following seven administrative divisions:-

Ajmer Division	–	Ajmer, Bhilwara, Nagaur, Tonk
Bharatpur Division	–	Bharatpur, Dholpur, Karauli, Sawai Madhopur
Bikaner Division	–	Bikaner, Churu, Sriganganagar, Hanumangarh
Jaipur Division	–	Jaipur, Alwar, Jhunjhunu, Sikar, Dausa
Jodhpur Division	–	Barmer, Jaisalmer, Jalore, Jodhpur, Pali, Sirohi
Kota Division	–	Baran, Bundi, Jhalawar, Kota
Udaipur Division	–	Banswara, Chittaurgarh, Pratapgarh, Dungarpur, Udaipur, Rajsamand

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Forts and Palaces

Introduction

The term fort is derived from a Latin word *fortis,* means strong. A fort is military building enclosed by a strong wall to withstand a heavy artillery attack. The fortress is a large building of several apartments, strongly designed and defended from such attacks. *Manusmriti, Agnipuran* and *Arthashatra* among others have mentioned six types of forts – Giri Durg (Hill Fort), Jal Durg (Water Fort), Van Durg (Forest Fort), Dhanva Durg (Desert Fort), Mahi Durg (Ground Fort) and Nar Durg (enclosed and protected by troops). The hill and water forts were considered the most invincible forts followed by forest and desert forts. In Europe the hill forts were built during Neolithic period which continued to be adopted as the best defensive site in the following ages.

The history of fortification in the subcontinent dating back to Indus Valley Civilization flourished during 2500-2000 BC. However, the fortified cities have also been found in the Mesopotamia civilization. The city of Uruk in ancient Sumer of Mesopotamia is believed to be the oldest walled city. The fort of Jericho in ancient Greece surrounded by 15 ft. wide and 9 ft. deep moat is dated 7003 B.C. The forts were also built during the epic period of *Mahabharat* and *Ramayan* at Hastinapur and Ayodhya respectively. The castle of Ravan was situated on the Trikuta hills surrounded by sea in Lanka. The fortified city was also found during archeological excavations at Harappa near Sindh in Pakistan. A 50 ft. high fort of sun-dried earth bricks was found on the site of Mohanjodaro in Pakistan. The mound of Kot Digi, 50 km north of Mohanjodaro records the existence of fortified settlements. The mound of 65 ft. high fort spreading over an area of 15

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acres was unearthed at Charsada, the capital of Gandhara in Pakistan. Its rampart was made of sun-dried mud bricks surrounded by moat. Similar mounds were also found on the site of ancient civilization at Takshila in Pakistan, Lothal in Gujarat, Kalibangan in Rajasthan and some parts of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The Indus valley people had learnt the art of fortifying their cities by building a massive mud brick wall, defending themselves from intrusion into their territory. A fortified wall measuring 240 metres in length and 120 metres in breadth with rectangular bastions was discovered at Kalibangan in Sriganganagar district of Rajasthan. The excavations at Ahar (Udaipur), Nuh (Bharatpur), Ganeshwar (Sikar) and Jodhpur revealed the vestiges of fortified city of early civilization. A 100 ft. x 80 ft. mud brick wall was discovered at Ahar. The Great China wall of 3rd century B.C. was an early defensive system of a city. The forts have been built under all dynasties from ancient to Mughal period for self defence of the ruler as well as for his people.

Indian art and architecture developed more during Mauryan period when wood and stone were used in building forts, palaces and other buildings. Chandragupt Maurya had built a wooden fort measuring 14.48 km in length and 2.41 km in breadth with a moat around it in Bihar. The Romans also used stone and wood in building their fortresses. Emperor Ashok used solid rock in building stupa, pillars, lion throne and palaces during his reign in 3rd century B.C. His architecture was influenced from Persian and Egyptian art. Ashok built a palace near Patna which consisted of several exquisitely carved rock pillars enclosed by a high brick wall. The most important contribution to Indian art and architecture of this period was sculptures of Ajanta and Ellora. The art of stone carving developed during this period. A rock-cut sculpture of Buddha at Sarnath belonged to this period. An 8th century rock-cut Kailash temple of Ellora in Maharashtra is an architectural marvel of medieval period: The Buddhist monasteries were built on the pattern of fort. The monasteries of Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir and Lahaul & Spiti in Himachal Pradesh are such edifices.

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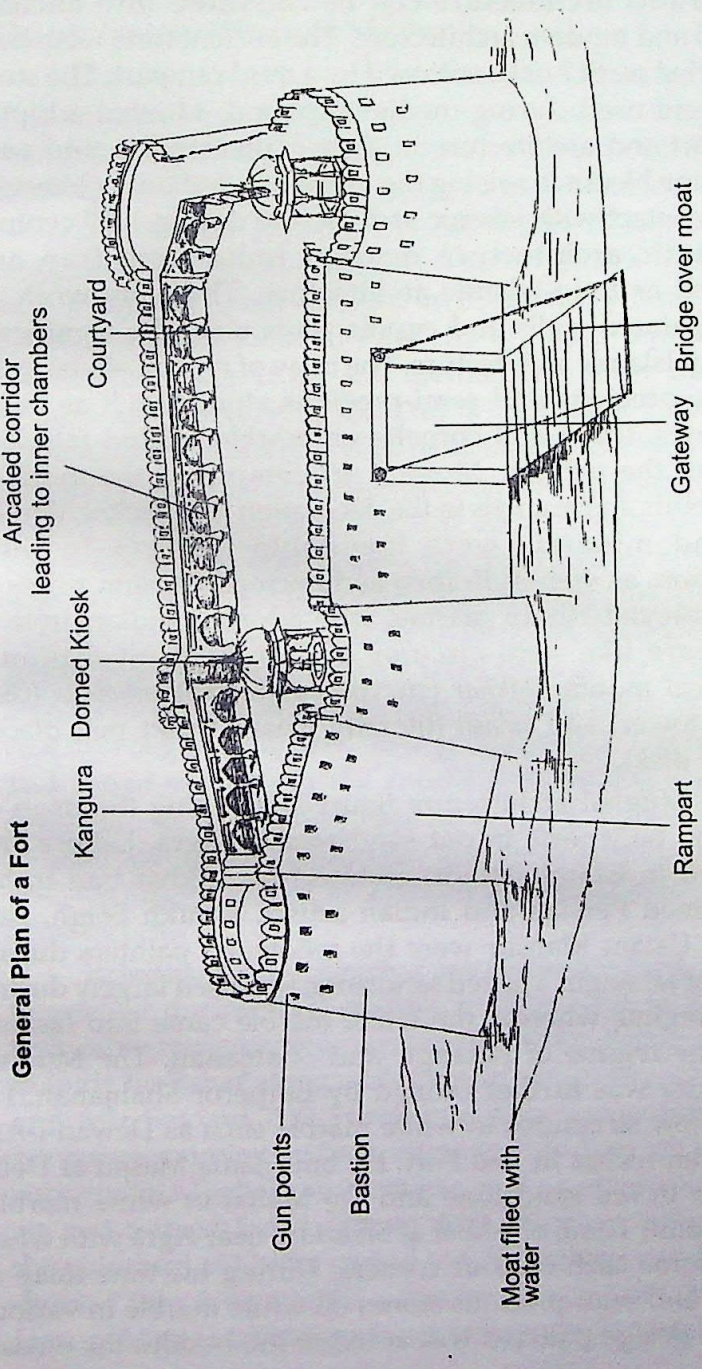

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The fort architecture can be classified into ancient, medieval and modern architecture. The ancient forts were built of sun-dried earth bricks enclosed by a mud rampart. The stone bricks were used during medieval period. Mughal adopted Persian art and architecture in their craftsmanship and used heavy stone blocks in raising the fortresses. Indian architecture came in contact with Islamic architecture during 12th century AD. Islamic architecture reached India from Iran and developed as Indo-Islamic architecture. The inlay work on marble, painted walls and cupola roofs were the significant features of Islamic architecture. The inlay of mirror, silver, gold, cut-glass, precious and semi-precious stones such as onyx, jasper, lapis, topaz and cornelia on marble offered fabulous interior of the palaces. Mughal art comprised the motif of flowers, birds and animals in the decoration. The arches, domed roofs and minarets were inevitable features in their construction, as seen in Roman architecture. Muslim rulers in India employed Hindu masons who adopted Indian style of architecture like semi-circular domes, high level plinth, geometrical motifs, *shikhar* (curvilinear tower), *amalaka* (disk atop the tower) and *kalash* (literally means water pot, placed on top of disk).

The Mughal architecture flourished during the reign of Akbar. He built forts in red sandstone at Agra, Lahore and Allahabad in Islamic-Hindu architecture. Akbar had in his court trained Persian and Indian artists. Farukh Beigh, Aqa Raja and Ustam Mansur were the renowned painters during the time of Jahangir. The red sandstone was used largely during Akbar's regime whereas the white marble came into fashion during the regime of Jahangir and Shahjahan. The Mughal architecture was further refined by Emperor Shahjahan. He rebuilt a few structures in white marble such as Dewan-i-Am and Dewan-i-Khas in Red Fort. He built Jama Masjid at Delhi and Agra in red sandstone and Taj Mahal in white marble. Jahangir built Tomb of Akbar at Sikandra near Agra with white marble dome each on four corners. During his time inlay of precious and semi-precious stones on white marble in various hues and design patterns was at its zenith, besides the mosaic

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of coloured cut-glass used in decorating the palaces such as Sheesh Mahal (Palace of Mirror).

The forts and palaces of Rajasthan represent Mughal-Rajput architecture which takes into account the prominent features like domes, arches, minarets, perforated balconies, latticed windows, carved cupola roofs, meticulously chiseled stone and marble pillars. The City Palace of Jaipur embodies Mughal-Rajput architecture. A 5-storey Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds) and Jantar Mantar, an observatory built by Raja Jai Singh II and the fortified Pink city of Jaipur represent Rajput architecture. Rajput art and architecture show the influence of Jain architecture of Gujarat which used rock stones in building the Jain temples with meticulously chiseled and carved images of Jain and Hindu deities. The Jain temples at Ranakpur, Mount Abu and in Jaisalmer fort are architectural marvels of Jain edifices. The time came when the Mughal type mansions were replaced with gothic architecture of British. The Parliament House, Rashtrapati Bhawan, Gateway of India, North Block and South Block were built in the gothic style of architecture. New materials like concrete, glass, wrought and cast iron began to be used during this period. The high ceilings and broad walls kept the rooms cool during summer. The Britishers built William Fort at Kolkata, Fort St. George at Madras and a fort at Bombay. The French fort at Wandiwash and Portuguese fort at Daman are examples of modern architecture.

Rajasthani paintings that ornament the forts and palaces flourished during 16th century to 19th century AD. Mughal style miniature paintings were originated in Persia and brought to India by Babar along with Persian artists like Abdus Samad and Mir Sayyad Ali. Humayun also promoted the art of miniature paintings which influenced Indian art greatly. The subsequent Mughal emperors except Aurangzeb promoted this art and trained Indian artists. Rajasthani art influenced from the paintings of Gupta period too. Rajasthani paintings can be divided into four schools - Mewar, Bundi-Kota, Marwar and Jaipur. Mewar paintings have influence of Mughal and the

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local folk art. The theme of painting was mythological, royal court, procession and folk legends. Nathdwara style made the paintings of Lord Krishan, Srinathji, rag, ragini and seasons. Bundi-Kota paintings depict typical style with the use of red and brown colours, besides blue, red, white and golden colours. It has the influence of Mewar, Mughal, Deccan and Maratha arts. Kota paintings are simple as compared to Bundi school. Marwar painting was influenced by Ajanta murals apart from Mughal and Mewar arts. The red, yellow and golden colours have been used enormously. The men and women are painted short and stout. Jaipur painting has influence of Mughal and the local Rajasthani art. Bikaner school of art has influence of Mughal and the Deccan art. The theme of painting was hunting scene, rag and ragini, royal court, procession, folks and nature. The yellow and lustrous golden are dominating colours in Bikaner school of art. It is known for beautiful paintings of eyes, lips, nose in woman figures.

Architectural features

A fort dominates the land like a king in his kingdom. The fortification of city by a strong wall was the first step to guard the territory and weaken the enemy at the outskirts. The high gates in the city walls were strategically located and well guarded. The fort was encircled by a strong and high rampart protecting the inner buildings from assault. The rampart was consisted of bastions with battlement that unfolded the front view of the adjacent wall. The bastions were made solid as well as hollow. The solid bastions would have huge cannons on them along with large numbers of defenders. The hollow bastions provided additional defence at the periphery with movement of guards in between. The turret was used for mounting vigil round the fort complex. The tunnels and secret routes were devised invariably for the exit of royalty at the time of exigency. The entrances, staircases and corridors were made narrow and low to restrict the free movement of the enemy. The rampart was pierced with slits for musketry as well as throwing boiling oil on the invading party. The gateways were built high and wide for free access of elephants.

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Its heavy doors were studded with iron spikes for countering the elephants' attack. A wide and deep moat round the fort was a significant feature of medieval fortification. The moat was made more inaccessible for the enemy by filling it with water, snakes and crocodiles. Sometimes the moat was overgrown with wild bushes. The Old Fort at Delhi has such a wide moat filled with water where the people enjoy boating. The fort was occupying an enormous space to house a large population of the town during assault who altogether defended the fort.

The fort was stocked up with necessary provisions for its large numbers of defenders during the protracted siege. The plenty of water was made available in the fort. The shortage of provisions sometimes made the defenders to lose the battle. The ministers, courtiers, army commanders and chiefs also lived in spacious haveli in the fort. The fort was seat of power held by the king and the people were abided by his orders to the extent to opt for the heroic deeds of *jauhar** and *kesaria***. Before that the interiors of the palaces were smashed and the valuables destroyed. The fort usually housed palaces, courts, temples, wells, water tanks, Dewan-i-Am, Dewan-i-Khas, Zanana palace, kitchens, dance and music rooms, army establishment, residential apartments, treasury, store houses for weaponry and food grains.

The design and strength of the fort changed with the passage of time in view of use of high-tech armoury in the warfare. Earlier, the catapult was used to hurl heavy stones inside the fortification. The use of cannons in 15th century AD made the fort structure stronger. The cannon balls which were

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* *Jauhar (mass self-immolation by women in a war during medieval period was called Jauhar. The practice was observed by women to retain their self honour and evade abuse at the hands of Muslim invaders when the defeat was imminent. Sometimes it was also done even before the battle when the defeat or death was certain so that their men could fight with the enemy party in full of fury).*

** *Kesaria (literally means saffron or yellow; Kesaria was observed by men in the battle by wearing yellow robes and fighting against the Muslim invaders to their last breath when the defeat was imminent. it was done together with Jauhar).*

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made of stone and metal were replaced with explosives in early 19th century making the battlement wall vulnerable. The rifles were made more sophisticated by the middle of 19th century. It was followed by machine guns and light machine guns by the end of 19th century. The modern underground bunkers are made to counter the high-tech artillery attack. The moat or the boundry wall is replaced with barbed fencing on the border. Now the sophisticated bunkers or chambers are being explored to counter the bio-chemical warfare as well.

The architectural and structural difference between fort and palace is that the palace is void of usual rampart and bastions enclosed by moat. The fort is rough and tough construction whereas the palace is delicate and embellished construction. The palaces are composed of perforated balconies and latticed windows embellished with enormous inlay work and adorned with domes topped by finials. Amber palace is often called Amber fort but in fact, it is Amber Palace due to above reasons.

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Marwar Region

Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur

Mehrangarh fort is situated emphatically on the 400 ft. high summit at the heart of Jodhpur city overlooking the cluster of whitewash houses. It is located at 26° 18' north latitude and 73° 03' east longitude in the western part of Rajasthan. Rao Jodha founded the Jodhpur city in 1459 AD and shifted the capital of Marwar from Mandore to Jodhpur on the advice of a hermit who lived in a mountain cave called '*Bhakar Chidiya*. Marwar has been referred by terms Maru-sthal, Maru-bhoomi and Maru-desh. 'Maru' and 'sthal' literally means 'desert' and 'place' respectively. Desert is also symbolized with death in want of vegetation and water. Hence, Maru-bhoomi, Maru-desh and Mar-war connote a land or region of death. This chunk of land is situated in southwest Rajasthan. The northwest Marwar is crowned with Aravalli range while the rest is a part of Thar desert where harsh living conditions prevails over due to arid topography. In 1900, Marwar was struck by a severe famine which took many lives.

Mehrangarh fort is 5 km from the main city. Raja Maldev fortified the city by constructing 8 km long, 25 ft. high and 5 to 10 ft. thick wall consisting of six gateways named after the surrounding cities viz. Jalori pole, Nagauri pole, Hasta pole, Sojati pole, Siwana pole and Chand pole. Jodhpur is bounded by Nagaur in the east, Bikaner in the northeast, Pali in the south, Barmer in the southwest and Jaisalmer in the west. The district has total area of 22,850 sq. km fed by Luni river which originates from Aravalli Mountains in Ajmer. Jodhpur can be reached through a network of road and rail connection. It is 340 km from Jaipur, 597 km from Delhi and 260 km from

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Udaipur. It can be reached by air from Mumbai, Delhi, Udaipur and Jaipur. Most of Rajasthan is accessible by a network of rail service.

Rao Jodha had laid the foundation of Mehrangarh fort on May 12, 1459. As per tradition, a man namely Rajiya Meghwal was buried alive under the foundation of the fort. Mehrangarh fort is built of red sandstone and embodies Rajput architecture. The fort is 500 yards in length and 250 yards in breadth encircled by a strong rampart that varies in height from 20 ft. to 120 ft. consisting of several bastions of different height ranging from 10 ft. to 70 ft. The fort has two arched entrances - Fateh pole in the southwest and Jai pole in the northeast. Another entrance is through 16th century Loha pole. Its huge doors are studded with sharp spikes. Fateh pole was built by Maharaja Ajit Singh in 1707 to commemorate his victory over Mughal army, while Jai pole was built by Maharaja Man Singh in 1808 on his victory over Jaipur. Jai pole bears the marks of cannon balls of Jaipur army which struck Jodhpur in 1808. The Jaipur army commanded by Maharaja Jagat Singh also fired cannons near Rasolai Tank and Singodion ki Bhakri. A tomb of Shaheed Bhure Khan who died fighting against Jaipur army is built in the fort. When Jai pole was being constructed, Goverdhan, the fort commander asked his men to remove the tomb to make space for Jai pole. On the following night Govardhan saw Bhure Khan in his dream who was requesting him not to demolish his tomb as he had laid his life for his master. Goverdhan apprised Maharaja Man Singh of his dream, who not only spared his tomb but also maintained it on the state's expenses.

Rao Jodha built Chamunda Mata temple in the fort complex in 15th century. He brought the idol of goddess Chamunda, the Kul-devi (family deity) of Rathores from Mandore and installed it in this temple. A number of small and big size cannons have been installed on the bastions in all directions towards the town below. Some of the cannons are exceptionally huge in size and fabulous in design. From here comes into view the gorgeous Jaswant Thada, a white marble

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cenotaph of Maharaja Jaswant Singh-II. It was built by his son in 1899. The portraits of Jodhpur rulers adorn the walls of cenotaph. The Rani Talab, Gulab Sagar and two wells in the fort were a good source of water.

The fort houses palaces built by different Rathore rulers during their reign. The palaces are masonry work of white marble and red sandstone. They are lavishly decorated with gold, silver, semi-precious stones, cut-glass, lacquer work and superb colours. Moti Mahal (Pearl Palace) was built by Maharaja Sur Singh in the 17th century. The ceiling of the palace is embellished with mirror work, later beautified with lacquer work by Maharaja Takht Singh. The walls are adorned with arched alcoves. The pillars are in lustrous gold. The coloured glasses on the latticed windows and light passages emit rays of different colours. Fateh Mahal (Victory Palace) and Shringar Mahal (Dressing Palace) were built by Maharaja Ajit Singh and Maharaja Abhay Singh respectively. The cut-glass work in these palaces affords glittering interior. The stunning frescos ornament the ceilings and the walls. Zanana Mahal (Woman Palace) also known as Jhanki Mahal, is fairly spacious and displays elegant palanquins of queens. The latticed windows in the Zanana Mahal facilitated the royal ladies to watch the activities at Shringar chowk. The chowk was also the venue for coronation ceremony of the Maharaja. Sheesh Mahal (Mirror Palace) has an extensive mirror work on the ceilings and the walls in Rajputani fashion along with the murals of deities. Abhay Singh built Phool Mahal (Flower Palace) in the middle of 18th century. Maharaja used to meet the important dignitaries in this palace. The palace has an ornate ceiling in mirror in geometric pattern drawn with gold, silver and blue colours. The arched openings supported on pillars bear thickly carved arabesques. The ornately carved latticed doors and windows are adorned with coloured glasses. The floor is laid out in white marble. Maharaja Takhat Singh built Takhat Vilas, decorated with murals showing female dancers, durbar and queens around Maharaja. The latticework of gold and ivory on doors and windows is praiseworthy.

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Maharaja Ummed Singh built Ummed Bhawan palace which was completed in 20 years in 1948. It is built of *makrana* marble and red sandstone. A well-known British architect Henry Vaughan Lanchester had designed this palace. The palace provides modern amenities including swimming pool. A part of the palace has been converted into a 5 star heritage hotel. The magnificent palace looks gorgeous on the hill at distance. The palace also houses a museum which has collections of royal items.

The museum in the fort is divided into several galleries displaying turbans, armoury, art objects, palanquins, haudas etc. The turban gallery displays a variety of turbans in bright colours, worn in different style in Rajasthan. The armoury gallery among others displays the sword of Akbar, Khanda of Rao Jodha, and sword of Maharaja Ajit Singh, which has two edged steel blade and steel hilt. The swords are adorned with beautiful hilt carved out of ivory, silver, rhino horn and wood in the shape of dragon, rabbit and birds. The hilt of Abkar's sword is decorated with gold. A shield covered with leather is decorated with cotton fabric, silver thread, beads and semi-precious stones. A steel helmet has gold overlay. The daggers depict the scenes drawn from *Ramayan*. Gupti, a secret weapon, has carved steel hilt in flower and bud shape. Some of the rifles are done with gold work on their barrels. Daulat Khana displays some art objects of Mughal period.

The palanquin gallery (Rajat Khasa) has collection of palanquins made of carved wood, decorated with bright colours, silver, cut-glass and exquisite cushions. The design and size of palanquins commensurate to the status of its user like Prince, Princess, Priest, king and queen. A palanquin made of England is enormously cushioned. One huge gold plated palanquin was won by Maharaja of Marwar from Ahmedabad. It has domical roof with glass enclosures in carved wooden frame. The silver objects like dancing lady, rose water bottle, Pan-daan, carpet weights in bulbous spherical shape with inverted lotus petals are attractive. The wooden cosmetic box decorated with inlay of ivory, houqua bowls made

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of zinc, copper and lead with inlaid silver are also put on the show. The silver idol of goddess Gangaur, one of the incarnations of Goddess Parvati, dressed in traditional Rajputani costume, is graceful. Gangaur is worshipped by married women for longevity of their husbands and by unmarried girls for a suitable match. One of walls is adorned with a portrait of Veer Durga Das Rathore (1635-1718) who guarded the child Maharaja Ajit Singh all the time in full body armour on the horseback. The rifles have been encased on the wall in glass shelve. Toran (a ceremonial symbol installed at the gateway) depicts the image of Lord Ganesh in different sizes, designs and colours. The gorgeous elephant haudas are decorated in silver and gold. A hauda consisting of two seats was placed on the elephant's back. The front seat was occupied by the Maharaja while the rear by his bodyguards.

The museum has centuries old huge cannons named Kilkila, Shambhunath and Ghazni Khan. Maharaja Ajit Singh got built Kilkila cannon from Ahmedabad. Maharaja Abhay Singh seized Shambhunath from Sarbuland Khan. Ghazni Khan was won by Maharaja Gaj Singh from Jalore in 1607. A small chamber displays cradles of royal kids. The cradles have been designed and decorated in bright colours. One of the walls is adorned with the portraits of Marwar rulers.

History

Marwar was ruled by Rathore Rajputs who claimed their descent from the progeny of Kush, son of Lord Ram. Marwar comprised the territories of Jodhpur, Pali, Jalore, Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Sirohi, Hanumangarh, Nagaur and Ganganagar. It split into several principalities in the 13th century ruled by different Rajput clans such as Pratihars, Rathores, Guhils, Yadavs, Bhatis, Chauhans, Sisodias and Panwars.

In 733 A.D. Raja Dantidurg established Rashtrakut empire in southern India. A branch of Rashtrakut, which later came to be known as Rathores in Rajputana, conquered Kathiawad, Badayun and Kannauj from Pratihars and Muslim

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rulers. Consequently, Mohd. Ghauri attacked Kannauj in 1194 which made Rashtrakut or Rathores to flee towards Marwar. The Rathore chief Sihaji along with his people reached Pali on way to pilgrimage to Dwarka in Gujarat. The Brahmins of Pali were facing the oppressions of Meenas and Mers tribesmen. The Brahmins approached Sihaji for help to contain the growing tyranny of Meenas. Sihaji subdued Meenas and Mers and subsequently became the lord of Pali. He also annexed the adjoining areas in the middle of 13th century. The subsequent Rathore rulers expanded the territory upto Idar in Gujarat. Sihaji's eldest son Aasthan captured the territory of Khergarh from Guhils. He was succeeded by his eldest son Duhad. Raipal, eldest son of Duhad, attacked Mandore ruled by Pratihars, but failed to subdue it. Mandore was finally conquered by Rao Chunda, tenth in succession, in 1394. He further conquered Nagaur. He got his daughter married to Rana Lakha of Mewar. The nobles of other Rajput clans were also subjugated by Rathores which made the Rathore kingdom large and powerful.

Rao Jodha had 14 sons. Bika, son of Rao Jodha founded Bikaner in 1485. Jodha's fourth son, Duda ruled over Merta independently where Meerabai was born to Ratan Singh, son of Duda. She was married to prince Bhojraj, son of Rana Sanga. Jodha's second son, Suja ascended the throne of Marwar and reigned for a longer period. He died in 1516. His grandson, Ganga came to the throne and reigned for 12 years. Ganga along with his troops allied with Rana Sanga against Babar in the battle of Khanwa. Maldev seated on the throne of Marwar in 1532. During his reign, Shershah Suri defeated Humayun who fled to Marwar. Shershah apprehended that Maldev has sheltered Humayun. Shershah attacked Marwar and defeated Maldev at Merta in 1544. After the death of Shershah Suri, Humayun recaptured Delhi. Akbar invaded Marwar in 1561 and captured Merta and Nagaur. Akbar gave both the states to Raja Raisingh of Bikaner. Chandrasen, son of Maldev came to the throne in 1569 and acknowledged the supremacy of Mughal emperor Akbar. Udai Singh, brother of Chandrasen

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acceded to the throne of Marwar in 1584. He also acknowledged the supremacy of Mughals and got his daughter married to prince Salim (Jahangir), son of Akbar. Udai Singh was bestowed upon the title of Raja by Akbar. He was popularly called Mota Raja Udai Singh due to his robust health. Udai Singh died in 1595 and Shur Singh came to the throne. Shur Singh commanded Mughal army and subjugated Sirohi. He also defeated Sultan Muzaffarshah of Gujarat and sent a large booty to Akbar. Shur Singh built palaces, water reservoirs, gardens, temples and boaris (stepped well). He died in 1620. His son Gaj Singh fought battles for Mughals. Jaswant Singh, son of Gaj Singh repelled the attack of Aurangzeb who wanted to dislodge Shahjahan from the throne of Delhi. Aurangzeb took control of Jodhpur in 1678 after the death of Jaswant Singh. The queens of Jaswant Singh committed sati on his funeral pyre except one who was seven month pregnant. She gave birth to Ajit Singh who became the next ruler of Marwar. He was barely a kid when Aurangzeb attacked Marwar and captured Mehrangarh. He plundered Marwar and destroyed temples. Later, the emperor awarded the jagir of Jalore, Sanchore and Siwana to Ajit Singh. But the Rathores wanted Jodhpur for which they continued their battle relentlessly against Mughals. Aurangzeb died on February 21, 1707. Rathores captured Mehrangarh from Mughal's control and enthroned Ajit Singh as Maharaja of Jodhpur on March 12, 1707. Ajit was saved by nobles through a faithful Muslim during invasion of Aurangzeb. Ajit Singh honoured him by awarding him with jagir and calling him '*Kaka*'.

After the death of Aurangzeb, the war of succession broke out between his sons, Shah Alam and Azam Shah. Mughal princes sought military help from Maharaja Ajit Singh of Marwar and Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur respectively. But they remained silent on the issue. When Shah Alam became the emperor of Delhi by the name of Bahadurshah, he set out with a large contingent towards Jaipur and Jodhpur. Before anything could happen, both the states accepted the supremacy of Mughal emperor. Shah Alam gave the jagir of

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Sojat, Siwana and Phalodi to Ajit Singh and retained Jodhpur and Merta with him. Ajit Singh and Sawai Jai Singh along with their chieftains and troops joined the Mughal army in a campaign in the south in March 1708. When a large part of the army had crossed over the Chambal river, Ajit Singh and Sawai Jai Singh took opportunity of the situation and retreated to their states in the absence of Muslim army there. Ajit Singh captured Mehrangarh from its military officer, Mehrab Khan in July 1708. Jai Singh occupied Amber by pulling down its military officer Sayyad Hussain Khan. Ajit Singh also captured Bikaner and Nagaur. Shah Alam could not take immediate step to contain the Rajput revolt. In 1710 Shah Alam was returning to Ajmer after his campaign in the south. In anticipation of repercussion by the emperor, Ajit Singh sent a peace proposal to Shah Alam. The emperor accepted the proposal and returned Jodhpur to Ajit Singh.

Farukhsiyar became the emperor of Delhi after defeating Jahandarshah in 1713. Farukhsiyar was removed from the throne under conspiracy of Sayyad brothers Hussain Ali and Abdullah Khan. When Naseeruddin Muhammad Shah displaced Farukhsiyar, he killed Sayyad Hussain Ali Khan and arrested Abdullah Khan. Maharaja Ajit Singh acknowledged the supremacy of the emperor and sent his son, Abhay Singh to Mughal Durbar. Ajit Singh was assassinated by his son Bakht Singh in 1724. The nobles, chieftains and feudal lords held Bakht Singh and Abhay Singh responsible for slaying Ajit Singh. His sons Anand Singh and Rai Singh were against the enthronement of Bakht Singh and Abhay Singh. However, Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah enthroned Abhay Singh as Maharaja of Marwar. Abhay Singh proved an efficient ruler. He married the daughter of Sawai Jai Singh of Amber. He suppressed the turmoil of feudalists and awarded the territory of Idar to his brothers. Bakht Singh was made the lord of Nagaur. Mughal emperor removed Nawab Sarbulland Khan, the governor of Gujarat and appointed Abhay Singh in his place in 1730 to curb the Maratha's aggression in Gujarat. Marathas were strengthening their bases in Gujarat by

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capturing Baroda, Daboi and other places. Abhay Singh signed a pact with Baji Rao Peshwa in 1731 to end the insurrection and also to free Baroda and Daboi from Pilaji Gaikwad and Kanthaji. Abhay Singh also launched an attack on Bikaner and Merta which resulted into peace treaty. After the death of Maharaja Abhay Singh in 1749, his son Ram Singh succeeded to the throne. Ram Singh proved an ineffective ruler. The nobles and the feudalists were unhappy over his weak governance. They approached Bakht Singh to take over Marwar's reign. Bakht Singh sought military assistance from Mughal emperor to dislodge Ram Singh. Ram Singh also sought help from Marathas and Kachhawas of Jaipur against Bakht Singh. A couple of battles were fought between the forces of Bakht Singh and Ram Singh at Luniyawas and Merta. Bakht Singh won the battle and captured Jodhpur in 1751. Bakht Singh fell sick and died on September 21, 1752.

Vijay Singh, son of Bakht Singh succeeded as ruler of Marwar in 1753. The disgruntled Maharaja Ram Singh allied with Maratha leader Jayappa Scindia for an offensive on Jodhpur to pull down Vijay Singh. A fierce battle took place at Ajmer in 1754 in which Rathores were defeated with heavy losses. Scindia captured Ajmer, Kishangarh and Merta and seized their cannons. Maharaja Vijay Singh along with his troops fled to Nagaur for safety. The Marathas laid siege to the fort of Nagaur and cut off the supply. Vijay Singh agreed to pay Rs.50 lakhs along with Jalore to Ram Singh, but Scindia wanted the throne of Jodhpur for Ram Singh. Vijay Singh hatched a conspiracy to eliminate Jayappa Scindia. He sent his two faithful persons in the camp of Scindia in the guise of merchants who slayed the Maratha leader. Both the Rajput merchants were also put to the swords by the Maratha troops. Raja of Bikaner extended military help to Vijay Singh to fight back the Marathas. Marathas defeated Rathores at Deedwana in 1755. Marathas and Rathores met again in the battlefield in 1756. The protracted battle exhausted the provisions in both the camps. The condition forced both the parties to enter into a pact in which Vijay Singh agreed to pay a tribute of Rs.50

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lakhs along with jagir of Merta, Sojat, Jalore, Siwana and Pali with 84 villages of Kekri to Ram Singh, besides handing over Ajmer to Marathas with an annual tribute of Rs.15 lakhs. However, Vijay Singh recaptured Ajmer from Marathas after their defeat at Panipat in 1761. But the Marathas reoccupied it from Vijay Singh and imposed heavy tribute on him. Ram Singh returned to Jaipur. Raja Sawai Madho Singh gave him the estate of Sambhar where he died in 1772.

Vijay Singh fell in love of a lady Gulabrai and conferred on her the status of Maharani which displeased the nobles. Gulabrai adopted Man Singh, grandson of Vijay Singh after the death of her own son Tejkaran. Gulabrai wanted Man Singh to be seated on the throne of Jodhpur. But the nobles enthroned Bhim Singh as Maharaja of Jodhpur in 1793 and Man Singh was given Jalore. Bhim Singh was the adopted son of Fateh Singh, the eldest son of Vijay Singh. Bhim Singh killed his uncles Sher Singh and Sawant Singh and cousin Shur Singh. Bhim Singh married the sister of Raja Pratap Singh of Jaipur at Pushkar in 1801. When Bhim Singh was in Pushkar, Man Singh plundered Pali and returned to Jalore. Bhim Singh laid siege to the fort of Jalore in 1801 which lasted for years but he could not subdue Man Singh. Bhim Singh died on October 20, 1803. His wife gave birth to Dhaunkal whose security was looked after by Sawai Singh, a chieftain of Pokaran. But the nobles chose Man Singh as lord of Marwar.

Man Singh wanted to marry Princess Krishan Kumari of Udaipur who was earlier proposed for Maharaja Bhim Singh. Maharaja Jagat Singh of Jaipur was also encouraged for this marriage by Sawai Singh so as to bring about a conflict between Marwar and Jaipur that would make way to install Dhaunkal at Jodhpur. Man Singh opposed the proposal of Jagat Singh and sent Pathan Chief Amir Khan for an assault on Jaipur in 1808. Amir Khan plundered Jaipur heavily. Maharaja Jagat Singh and Maharaja of Bikaner along with Sawai Singh attacked Jodhpur. The battle between Rathores and Kachhawas continued for months resulting into heavy causalities on both sides. Jagat Singh could not break the

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defences of Mehrangarh and returned to Jaipur after plundering Jodhpur. Krishan Kumari was forced to take poison to end the war between the two states. She died on July 21, 1810.

Man Singh connived with Amir Khan to eliminate Dhaunkal who was trying vigorously to get to the throne. Sawai Singh also conspired with Amir Khan for similar action against Man Singh. However, Amir Khan killed Sawai Singh and presented his head to Man Singh who in return awarded Amir Khan with the jagir of two villages and a large sum. Man Singh was the disciple of Devnath, a chief priest of Jallandharnath sect. The nobles and chiefs had to bow before the priest unwillingly. Amir Khan killed Devnath on the insistence of nobles and chiefs. The death of Devnath moved Man Singh deeply and he started living in isolation. His son Chhatra Singh came to the throne but died early due to illness.

In 1818, princely states of Rajputana entered into an alliance with British government who committed for their protection from any adversaries. British government enthroned Takht Singh, as the ruler of Marwar. Takht Singh died in 1873 and Jaswant Singh-II succeeded to the throne. He was an efficient ruler. He died in 1896. His son, Sardar Singh ruled over Marwar till 1911. In 1949, the state merged into India.

Tourist attractions around Jodhpur

Mandore 9 km from Jodhpur was ancient capital of Marwar. The lush green gardens of Mandore have high rock terraces and cenotaphs of Jodhpur rulers. The Hall of Heroes has 15 figures of Hindu deities carved out of the rock on the wall. **Rohetgarh** fort, 40 km from Jodhpur is a heritage hotel. **Mahamandir** temple built in 1812 is located at a distance of 4 km. **Balsamand Lake** built in 1159 is located at a distance of 5 km. A summer palace on the lake side is surrounded by lush green gardens. **Dhawa wild life sanctuary** with largest number of Indian antelopes is 45 km from Jodhpur. **Luni Fort** is another heritage hotel which was once the residence of the royal families. **Kailana Lake** is 11 km surrounded by small hills. **Osian,** known for 16 sculptured Jain and Brahminical temples,

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is situated at a distance of 60 km. **Khimsar Fort,** a Welcom Heritage Hotel is 90 km from Jodhpur. The fort was built by Rao Karan Singh, son of Rao Jodha in 1523. It is still the residence of the royal family of Khimsar. Khimsar fort was awarded the Grand Heritage classification by the Department of Tourism, Government of India in 1997-98,

A two-day Marwar festival is held in the month of October every year. The folk artists perform the 'Maand' folk music under the full moon on the theme of romantic life styles of Rajput rulers. The best season to visit Jodhpur is from October to March.

Fort of Jaisalmer

The fort of Jaisalmer stands majestically on the 250 ft. high Trikuta hill at the heart of Jaisalmer city overlooking the cluster of yellow sandstone houses, lofty wind mills and distant sand dunes. Legend has it that Rawal Jaisal had built this fort on Triangular or Trikuta hill on the advice of a sage. Jaisalmer, also an administrative headquarters, is located at 26°52′ north latitude and 70°55′ east longitude in western part of Rajasthan at an altitude of 225 metres above sea level. It is bounded by Pakistan in the northwest, Jodhpur and Bikaner in the northeast and Barmer in the south. Jaisalmer is populated by Bhati Rajputs. The caravan of Central Asian merchants with their camels laden with goods used to pass through Jaisalmer on way to Persia, Egypt and Arabia. Maharawal Mulraj had constructed a boundary wall 10-15 ft. high and 5-7 ft. thick with 6 gateways round the Jaisalmer city. Amar Bazar pole and Gharisar pole lead to the city from the west and the east respectively. Jaisalmer is connected with good rail/road network. It is 558 km from Jaipur and 864 km from Delhi. Jodhpur is the nearest airport at a distance of 285 km.

The fort of Jaisalmer is built of yellow stone and is also known as 'Sonar Quila' or the 'Golden Fort'. The fort occupies an area of 11.28 hectares enclosed by huge rampart that vary from 10 to 25 m in height. The fort has three layers of walls. The lowest wall served as a base or pitching wall to stop the

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erosion of the slope on the top on which the fort stands. The fort has two walls running parallel with a variable gap of 6-2 m in between known as *Mori,* built purposely for the movement of the security guards around the fort. The walls of solid stone blocks were erected without using any mortar or clay. The entire structure stands valiantly with its 81 bastions at present and each of which is 10 m in height. These bastions at regular intervals were provided not only with parapet wall on the top pierced by gun holes, but also embellished with projected arched-window balconies and peep holes. The lower part is a plain rampart without any bastion. The middle rampart has hallowed bastions while the third, the upper rampart has solid bastions. The big stone balls placed on the parapets were thrown on the enemies. The fort is approachable from northeast corner through four successive gateways viz. Akhai pole, Ganesh pole, Suraj pole and Hawa pole. Akhai pole was added later by Maharawal Akhai Singh (1722-62 AD) when the base wall was further extended. The rulers of Jaisalmer were great patrons of art and architecture. Several beautiful Brahmanical and Jain temples, magnificent palaces, havelis and gateways were built which clearly reflect the skill and dexterity of the stone masons and artistic excellence of Bhati rulers.

Akhai pole leads to the stone paved road to reach the next gateway of Suraj pole which was built by Maharawal Bhim. The top of the Suraj pole is adorned with an arched *Toran,* engraved with the figure of Sun in the centre and to the right is a watch tower capped with a vaulted octagonal kiosk. Passing through its nailed-doorway and ascending a steep-turn, one reaches the Ganesh pole or Bhuta pole, named on account of an image of Lord Ganesh engraved on its main lintel. It followed by pebbled pathway which leads to Hawa pole or Rang pole. These three gateways were built in between the reigns of Maharawal Bhim and Maharawal Manohar Dass (1577-1623 AD).

A boulder of yellow sandstone is engraved beautifully with the image of Jaisalmer fort showing all its apartments and routes within the fort.

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The fort houses palaces and havelis viz. Rang Mahal, Sarvottam Vilas, Gaj Mahal, Zanana Mahal, Moti Mahal, Rani Ka Mahal, Het Vilas, Roop Mahal and Anup Mahal besides, Laxminath temple, seven Jain temples and museum. The palaces are embellished with striking red, silver and lustrous gold in intricate floral pattern. The floral arches have gold line on the edges. The red and lustrous gold dominate the interior. The murals depict the scenes of court, battles, folk and royal procession. The walls and ceilings bear densely painted arabesques in red, blue, gold and silver colours. The latticed doors, windows and light passages are covered with coloured glasses. An extensive carved marble work, pillars meticulously chiseled in floral pattern, perforated projecting balconies crowned with curved roof, latticed windows and panels of coloured glass mosaic in yellow stone are marvelous.

Rang Mahal above the Hawa pole was built by Maharawal Mulraj II (1762-1820 AD). It is embellished with murals and arabesques. The murals depict the scenes of royal court and folk legends of Jaisalmer, Udaipur and Jaipur. Sarvottam Vilas, one of the best havelis built by Maharawal Akhai Singh (1722-1762) is decorated with blue tiles and glass-mosaic. Adjacent to these havelis is the Gaj Mahal or Gaj Vilas. It was constructed by Maharawal Gaj Singh in 1884. It is three-storeyed building with a row of carved balconies on each tier. The construction of its façade rests on the pillars and arches, intercepted by the intermittent projecting balconies. Just behind the Sarvottam Vilas and Rang Mahal is the Zanana Mahal which presents a shallow decoration in the blind spaces. Its arch decoration on the façade is attractive. Moti Mahal, another three-storeyed building was built by Mulraj-II in 1813. The front of the building is decorated with heavy floral motifs, particularly in the stone doors.

Laxminarayan temple is one of the earliest Brahmanical temples in the fort. It stands on a raised platform and consists of a square sanctum, a vestibule both enclosed by an ambulatory and a *mandap* followed by a small porch. Being enclosed on all sides, the temple is accessible by a flight of steps

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from the south and the west. The sanctum is topped by a curvilinear *shikhar*, adorned with *angashikhar*. It was built in 1440 AD.

Ratneswar Mahadev temple facing east is approached through a slightly raised staircase from both south and north sides. It consists of a porch, vestibule, pillared *mandap* with k*akshasana* having the provision of *pradakshinapath* and a *garbhagriha*. There is also a space for *parsvadevatas* on the north and south sides. In the pillared *mandap*, a *Shivling* is installed though the main deity is in the sanctum. The interior of the temple is decorated with sculptures. The *mandap* has a spiral ceiling while the sanctum a simple corbelled one. The *lalatabimba* is decked with Brahma, Mahesh and Vishnu. The porch has a flat square roof. The *sabhamandap* and the shrine of Parsvadevata are having domical ceiling while the sanctum has a curvilinear *shikhar*, surrounded by miniature *shikhars*. The *amalaka* is topped by *kalash* of which the finial is missing. To the southern part another miniature *nagara* shrine is attached to the main temple. The temple was built in 15th century AD.

Surya temple is facing east and has a raised *jagati*. It is approached through a flight of steps. On plan it consists of a porch, a *mandap* with *kakshasana* followed by a vestibule and *garbhagriha*. The sanctum of the temple has a curvilinear *shikhar*, which is further adorned with miniature *shikhars*. Another miniature shrine is on the southern side of the main temple.

Chamunda Mata temple, also facing east is dedicated to goddess Chamunda. It consists of a sanctum and a *mandap* with *pradakshinapath*. In front of the *mandap* there is a narrow balcony with arched openings. The interior is simple, but the exterior is intricately designed from *jagati* upto the parapet wall. The parapet in the eastern side presents the figure of five celestial musicians. The curvilinear *shikhar* of the *garbhagriha* is raised upon a square base. The main *shikhar* is adorned with *urusringas* having the figures of jumping lions on four corners. The *amalaka* is topped by a finial.

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Ranchhaudji temple is dedicated to Lord Krishan and Rukmini. This early *sandhara* temple on a raised platform is approached through a flight of steps. Facing east, it consists of a *garbhagriha* and a rectangular *mandap* with *kaksasan* on the east and the south. The marble image of Krishan and Rukmini are installed in the *garbhagriha*.

Parsavnath temple built by Maharawal Jai Singh in 1416 is the oldest and one of the most beautiful temples of the fort. On plan it shows a porch with carved *toran* that supported on four pillars in front, followed by *mukhamandap, rangamandap, antaral* and *garbhagriha*. The walls of the shrine are beautifully carved with animal and human figures. The shrine is crowned by *shikhar* which is further topped by an *amalaka*, holding a pot bearing lotus flower. The ceiling of the *mukhamandap* is profusely decorated. The courtyard is enclosed by a double colonnade finely carved small pillars and ornamented ceiling. Behind it there stands a series of cells containing seated *Tirthankara*. The temple is also called *Navatoraniya* after the nine towers in the *mandap* pillars. The *jangha* of the temple is studded with *mithuna* figures.

Sambhavanath temple is approached through the *rangamandap* of the Parsavanath temple. It is on the same plan as that of Parsavanath and the ceiling of the *rangamandap* having circular ribs with a lotus pendant, divine musicians and dancers. The *shikhar* is dwarf in nature where as the *mandap* roof is bell shaped. Inside is embellished with sculptured images of dancers and secular figures. The construction of the temple was initiated by the Oswal brothers in 1494 AD which completed in three years. The importance of this temple lies in the two underground chambers below the shrine where important Jain manuscript and miniatures are kept.

Shitalanathji temple was built in 1422. The temple is located to the right of Parsavanath temple and also approachable through its *rangamandap*. The plan of the temple is like that of the former one. Here the *rangamandap* does not have any open area and the whole set up seems to be squeezed and carried a very thin sculptured adornment.

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Chandraprabhuji temple is located on the right flank of the Parsavanath temple. It was built in 1453 and is approached through a staircase that leads onto to the *rangamandap* of the temple. It is a three storeyed structure having a shrine dedicated to Chandraprabhunath on each floor. On plan it has a sanctum followed by a vestibule and domical *rangamandap*. The entire structure is enclosed by a row of thirty one miniature shrines leaving a dark and narrow *pradakshinapath* (walkway). The parapet wall of the temple is formed by a row of miniature *shikhars*.

Rishavdevji temple is on the right of Chandraprabhuji temple. Built around 1480, this east facing temple consists of a *rangamandap* preceded by an open courtyard, *mukhamandap* and *gudhamandap*. The entire unit is enclosed on the back by row of miniature shrines. The *rangmandap* ceiling is devoid of sculptural addition but *mandovara* is adorned with female figures. The embattled parapet wall around the *shikhar* is a unique feature of this temple.

Shantinath and Kunthunathji temple were probably constructed in 1480 and 1490 respectively. The temple of Kunthalnathji was built by Seth Saindas. This double storeyed temple shows Kunthalnathji below and Shantinathji above. The sanctum of Kunthalnathji is on the ground floor while the *mandap* is raised majestically on the floor above. *Jagati* covers a small area but both the lower and upper corridors run very close. The lower *rangamandap* has four *toran* pillars while the upper one has a decorated ceiling embellished with dancers. The roof of the *mulaprasad* is designed in stepped pyramidal fashion with open balconies on all the four sides. The distinctive roof has been richly fabricated with roaring lions crowned by an *amalaka* and *kalash*. On plan they are showing porch followed by *ardhamandap, mandap, antarala and garbhagriha.*

Gyan Bhandar houses rare manuscripts written on palm leaves and papers. It has collection of 1126 palm leaves manuscript and 2257 papers manuscript.

These Jain temples are the architectural marvel of Jain edifices. The temples are built of yellow sandstone and each

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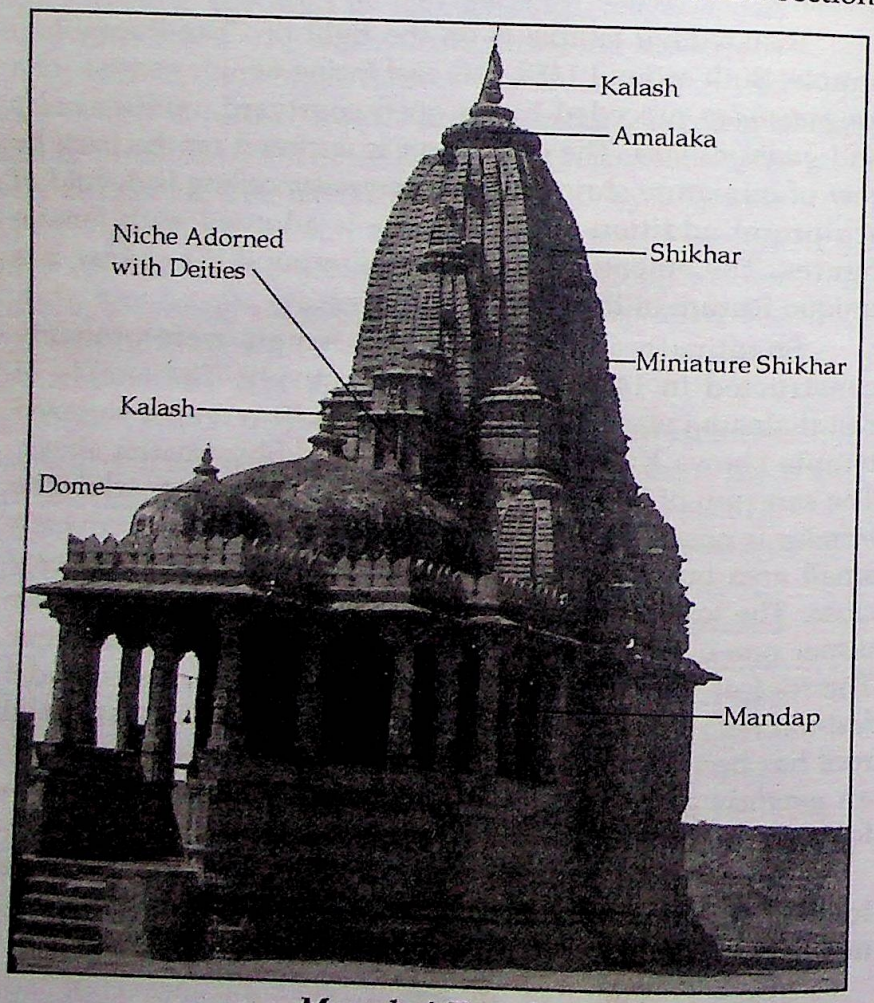
stone is meticulously chiseled and carved with the images of deities and arabesques. Besides, there are other shrines within the fort complex including Yoginimata temple, annapurna temple, Tikamrai or Adinarayan temple, Ghantiwalimata temple and Mahavir temple etc.

The museum in the fort displays armoury - daggers, whip, long barrel guns and flasks for storing gun powder etc. The museum is decorated with the portraits of Jaisalmer rulers. The photographs of princes and rulers of Rajputana with the British government officials adorn the walls. One of the sections



Meerabai Temple

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houses sculptures of deities and artifacts of royal insignia. The old currency notes in the glass shelves are of interest.

The archaeological Survey of India is undertaking conservation works at the fort walls, bastions, gateways and temples both brahmanical and Jain by way of reconstructing the fallen and collapsed portions of the fort wall along with its pitching walls, stitching of cracks in the fort walls, bastions and gateways, repairing the gun points etc., water tightening the top wall and the temple roofs and arches, removal of debris from *Mori* and water tightening of the ramp. These works are in different stages of progress.

History

Jaisalmer was ruled by *Chandravanshi* Bhati Rajputs. Bhatis fled from Punjab and settled at Jaisalmer during Turks invasion on Punjab in 12th century. Rawal Jaisal founded the Jaisalmer city and erected a fort on the Trikuta hill in 1156 AD. He also shifted the capital from Ludurva to Jaisalmer and ruled for 12 years. Ludurva, located at a distance of 16 km west of Jaislamer, was the ancient capital of Bhati Rajputs which was formally known as Ludravapur or Ludurvapatan after the Lodra Rajputs who ruled in this area before being ousted by the Bhatis. Ludurva was attacked by Muhammad of Ghajni and Mohd. Ghauri in 1025 AD and 1178 AD respectively and plundered it badly. The ruins and remnants of the place testify to its prosperity in the past. The most important remnants are the 11th century AD Jain temple dedicated to Parsavnath and the ruins of Hinglajmata temple. About 200 m northeast of this temple at Moomal-ki-Merhi, there is an old Shiv temple which houses a Chaturmukh Shivling of 10th century AD. Traditionally this place is also associated with the famous love story of Mahendra and Moomal, a popular folk tale of this region. The scientific clearance conducted by the Archaeological Survey of India, Jaipur Circle at Ludurva has brought to light remains of the ancient fortification wall along with bastions and plinth of a temple assignable to 9/10 century AD.

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Jaisal had two sons - Kelhan and Shalivan. Kelhan ascended the throne of Jaisalmer in 1168 but was removed by the nobles who installed Shalivahan in his place. He defeated Kathi tribe of Jalore. Shalivahan had three sons - Bijaldev, Wanar and Hansu. Bijaldev ruled for a short period. He was killed by his cousin. The nobles reinstalled Kelhan on the throne of Jaisalmer who ruled for 50 years. Kelhan defeated Khijran Khan of Sindh. He had six sons - Chachakdev, Palhan, Jaichand, Patimasi, Pitamchand and Osrad. Chachakdev succeeded to the throne in 1219 and ruled for 32 years. He overthrew Rathores of Kannauj and foiled their attempt to capture Jaisalmer. Karnsi, grandson of Chachakdev ruled for 28 years. Bhatotidas of Nagaur approached Karnsi for military assistance against Muzzafar Khan who had ransacked Nagaur badly. Karnsi overthrew Muzzafar Khan from Nagaur and restored the loot to Bhatotidas. Karnsi was succeeded by his son Lakhansen in 1272 and ruled for 4 years. Punyapal, son of Lakhansen was removed by the nobles on account of his ill temperament. Jaitsi, brother of Karnsi came to the throne in 1276. He had two sons - Mulraj and Ratansi. Mulraj's son Devraj was married to the princess of Jalore. Devraj had three sons - Janghan, Sirvan and Hamir. Hamir had three sons - Jait, Lunkaran and Meero.

Allauddin Khilji invaded Jaisalmer in 1295 during the reign of Jait Singh. The Muslim army laid siege to the fort which lasted for 8 years. The protracted siege resulted into loss of many Bhati Rajputs. Jait Singh also died during the siege and was cremated in the fort. Muslims also suffered a heavy casualty but failed to gain entry into the fort. Jait Singh was succeeded by Mulraj. Muslim army commanded by Mehboob Khan cut off the supply into the fort which made the situation miserable for defenders. Mulraj and Ratan Singh decided to perform *kesaria* and *jauhar* as final resort against the enemy. They had already dismantled the palaces of its costly decors. The jewels, money, royal costumes and other expensive items were destroyed in the fire of *jauhar*. 24000 Rajput women performed *jauhar* in the huge fire pit in the fort. Mulraj and

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Ratan Singh with 3700 men fell blindly on the Muslim army and put many to the sword. Mulraj and Ratan Singh fought heroically till their end. Muslim army entered into the fort and found everything in ruins. Mehboob Khan cremated the bodies of Mulraj and Ratan Singh according to Rajput customs. Ghadsi, nephew of Mulraj, was taken to Delhi by Allauddin Khilji. The site of *jauhar* is known as Satiyon-ki-Pagothia. Muslims retained their hold over the fort for a year and later abandoned it. Bhati clan Duda and Tilok Singh captured the fort and repaired it.

Ferozshah attacked Jaisalmer in 1306 during the time of Duda and Tilok Singh. Rajput forces fell weak before the strong army of Ferozshah. They organized themselves to perform *kesaria* and *jauhar*. 16000 women performed *jauhar* in the fort. Duda and Tilok Singh along with 1600 Rajput soldiers came out of the fort wearing saffron robe and slashed whosoever came to their way till their last gulp of air.

Lunkaran came to the throne of Jaisalmer in the middle of 16th century. Akbar invaded Jaisalmer in 1570 and subdued it during the reign of Harraj (1561-77). Akbar married the daughter of Harraj. He was succeeded by his son Bhim (1577-97). Bhim's son Nathu seated on the throne but he was slayed by Manohardas son of Kalyandas. After Manohardas (1627-50), Sabal Singh (1650-59) ascended the throne. He was an efficient and brave ruler. His son Amar Singh (1659-1701) succeeded as next ruler of Jaislamer. Amar Singh expanded territory of his state by subjugating many feudatories. He launched an offensive on Bikaner and plundered it. After the death of Amar Singh in 1702, his son Jaswant Singh (1701-1707) seated on the throne. Jaswant Singh had five sons – Jagat Singh (committed suicide), Ishwar Singh, Tej Singh, Sardar Singh and Sultan Singh. Jagat Singh had three sons – Akhay Singh, Budh Singh (1707-21 died due to illness) and Jorawar Singh.

Tej Singh (1721-22) ascended the throne after Jaswant Singh. After the death of Tej Singh, his three years old son came to the throne but Akhay Singh (1723-61) removed him and he seated on the throne and ruled for 40 years. Mulraj-II

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(1761-1891) succeeded as Rawal after the death of Akhay Singh. Mulraj had 3 sons – Rai Singh, Jait Singh and Man Singh. Rai Singh imprisoned his father Mulraj with the support of nobles. Mulraj remained in jail for 3-4 months. One Rathore lady got him released from the jail. She was the wife of a noble. Mulraj was reinstated after overthrowing Rai Singh along with his nobles from Jaisalmer. Rai Singh sought asylum from Raja Vijay Singh of Jodhpur.

Mulraj ruled for 58 years. He signed a treaty with British government in 1818. He died in 1820. His grandson Gaj Singh succeeded as next ruler. Gaj Singh died in 1846. He had a son who died prematurely. Gaj Singh's wife adopted Ranjeet Singh, son of younger brother of Gaj Singh. Ranjeet Singh seated on the throne (1846-64) and died childless. Verisal, son of younger brother of Ranjeet Singh was adopted who ruled till 1891. The reign remained peaceful under the British government.

Tourist attractions around Jaisalmer

The 18th century havelis viz. Nathmalji ki haveli, Salim Singhji ki haveli and Patwon ki haveli are known for their fabulous architecture. **Amar Sagar** is a picnic spot at a distance of 5 km from the city. Royal cenotaphs are located at Bada Bagh at a distance of 6 km. **Sam** sand dunes are 42 km from Jaisalmer. **Desert Festival** is held annually in February. The folk dance and music, camel race, contest of tying turban are the main attractions of desert festival. **Ludruva** is 16 km from the city. **Wood Fossil Park** is located on Barmer Road at Aakal at a distance of 17 km. The park has 180 million years old fossils of Thar desert. Best season to visit Jaisalmer is from August to March.

Junagarh Fort, Bikaner

Rao Bika, son of Rao Jodha of Jodhpur founded Bikaner city in 1485 AD and built a fort named Chintamani on the hill. It was completed in 3 years in 1488. It is presently in ruins. The present Junagarh fort is situated at the heart of Bikaner city at 28° 01′ north latitude and 73° 22′ east longitudes in the

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northwest part of Rajasthan. It is bounded by Ganganagar in the north, Jaisalmer and Bahawalpur district of Pakistan in the west, Jodhpur in the south, Churu in the east and Hanumangarh in the northeast. The Camel Research and Breeding Farm at Bikaner produces best riding camels in the world. Camel milk is also consumed here by the locals. The ancient silk route was passed through Bikaner district. The district has total area of 27,244 sq. km with two water canals- Ganga canal and Indra Gandhi canal which facilitate irrigation in the region. Bikaner is 330 km from Jaipur and 510 km from Delhi. The nearest airport is Jodhpur at a distance of 253 km.

Junagarh fort, literally means Purana Quila (Old Fort), was built by the 6th ruler of Bikaner, Maharaja Rai Singh during his reign (1574-1612). It is a ground level fort at an altitude of 237 metres above sea level enclosed by a strong wall. Maharaja Rai Singh laid its foundation on February 17, 1589 and completed the construction on February 17, 1594 under the supervision of his able Minister Karmchand. This fort was also named Chintamani but the locals called it Garh (Fort). When Lalgarh palace was built at a distance of 2 km from Chintamani fort in 1902, the Garh was then called Junagarh i.e. the Old fort and since then the fort got the name Junagarh. The fort embodies Mughal and Rajput architecture. Some of the interiors reflect European architectural features too. The subsequent rulers of Bikaner added more apartments and palaces in Junagarh. The fort is being managed by a Trust viz. Maharaja Rai Singhji Trust founded by Maharaja Dr. Karni Singh on October 19, 1961. The objectives of this trust have been illustrated at the end of this chapter.

Junagarh fort is surrounded by a moat 30 ft. wide and 25 ft. deep. It is built of red sandstone. Its 40 ft. high and 14 ft. thick rampart consists of 37 bastions. The fort has two main entrances - one from Karan pole in the east and second from Chand pole in the west. There are five inner gateways in the fort complex namely Daulat pole, Fateh pole, Ratan pole, Suraj pole and Dhruv pole. The arch of Suraj pole is inscribed with verses praising Raja Rai Singh. A symbolic white marble slab engraved with palm print of women who committed sati is

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attached at Daulat pole. The sculptures of great warriors Jaimal Mertia and Patta Sisodia on the elephant back have been erected on either side of Suraj pole. Raja Sur Singh constructed Suraj pole flanked by temples of Kalka devi and Kot-asri. He also constructed Sur Sagar which is located outside the fort complex.

Suraj pole opens onto a large courtyard with a small cannon in the centre. Maharaja Gaj Singh had won this cannon near Sojat gate in 1752. Holi festival was celebrated with the Maharaja in the courtyard on a white marble platform adorned with a domed kiosk, surrounded by fountains. The courtyard is flanked by tiers of overhanging balconies with curved roof and latticed windows in Mughal and Rajput style. Raisingh-ka-Chaubara has spacious coronation hall embellished with exquisite murals. The inlaid glass and lacquer work emit sparks of light in the hall. The mosaic floor in Italian tiles is striking. The Shiv Niwas garden in the court complex was built during the reign of Maharaja Doongar Singh (1872-1887) where Shiv temple, a prison, cannon room, store room and the stable for horses are located.

The hall of public audience displays Haviland Plane DH-9DE, crockery items, costumes, silverwares, weaponry of medieval period, coronation seat, haudas including one which was gifted by Mughal emperor. British government had presented the shot down parts of two DH-9DE Haviland war planes as souvenir to Maharaja Ganga Singh during his outstanding contribution in the 1st world war. The plane along with other trophies presented to the Maharaja was brought to Bikaner by ship in 1920. Maharaja Dr. Karni Singh of Bikaner restored the Haviland plane out of two damaged war souvenirs with the help of local craftsmen in 1985 and put it on the show at Vikram Vilas Durbar hall of the fort. The portraits of rulers of Bikaner adorn one of the walls.

Devli (a place of martyrdom) of Veer Dalla Baghor is erected in the fort. Dalla Baghor (a Rajput clan branched off from Songara Chauhan) fought bravely against the prisoners of Junagarh who broke the prison and started looting the

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palaces. Dalla Baghor along with a few soldiers stopped the prisoners to escape till the arrival of additional force. During the incident Maharaja Doongar Singh was away to Kutch-Bhuj for his marriage. Maharaja granted land to the family of Dalla Baghor and built his Devli.

The fort complex houses Bikaner Cultural Centre and Museum comprising art gallery, ritual crafts gallery, aristocratic textiles and costume gallery, photographs of royal families and miniature portrait gallery, glass and cut-glass objects, decorative wall paintings, gallery of aristocratic transportation. One of showcases displays items like carved walking sticks, silver goad for elephant, *Chaupar* game board, *toran*, ivory playing cards, cigarette holders made of ivory, etc. Chintamani yantra, a compass, horoscope of Maharaja Ganga Singh, a sandalwood sword with miniature tableaux, playing cards bearing the insignia of Bikaner, dressing table, rock glass buttons, cigarette case and gun-powder cases made of buffalo horns are displayed. It also houses Indo-European artifacts like cut-glass flower vases in British floral pattern, besides, French furniture, porcelains vases from China and Japan, oil paintings by European masters, mirrors and stained glasses from Belgium, cut-glass chandeliers from Venice. A coffee set (made in England) gifted to Maharaja Karni Singh on his wedding by the queen of Palanpur is attractive. The cosmetic objects like manicure, pedicure tools of ivory and silver handles, vanity box with Belgian mirror and gold-embossed glass bottles for perfumes are striking. There are hand-fans with gold and silver thread embroidery, jewellery boxes of wood, enameled brass, ivory and lac-turnery. The champagne cups, wine, whisky and liquor glasses imported from Europe and used in the palaces in Bikaner are exclusively showcased. The household objects of silver used by the royalty are also displayed.

Gaj Mahal, Chandra Mahal, Phool Mahal, Anup Mahal, Karan Mahal, Badal Mahal, Ratan Niwas, Ganga Niwas, Sur Mandir, Moti Mahal in the fort are masonry work of red sandstone and white marble. The unique feature of these

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palaces is extensive mirror and lacquer work representing high acumen of Mughal art prevailing at that time. The windows, stone screens and arched alcoves have been carved in Rajput-Mughal style. The walls and ceilings have been painted meticulously in multi-colours with lustrous gold. The murals depict the scenes of folk legends, battle, coronation ceremony, dance and other royal activities. Maharaja Karan Singh of Bikaner brought the art of decoration from southern India. Maharaja Karan Singh, a General in the Mughal army, was camping in southern India where he met Ali Raza who presented the Maharaja three pieces of art objects painted in gold. The first was in 'Sonakin' style, a piece of white plaster painted in gold in different design patterns. The second was in 'Jangli Sunthari' style. It was a piece of plaster with a shining tree and petals in green colour. It was delicately painted that the petals appeared to be real emeralds. The third piece was in 'Manovat' style. It was a pillar of clay but looked like real solid gold. Ali Raza told Maharaja Karan Singh that his family originally belonged to Jaisalmer. They had migrated to Multan due to famine and after many generations settled in southern India. Maharaja invited him to Bikaner and conferred on him the title of court artist. This art was also adopted by affluent people in decorating their havelis. The local craftsmen and artists also learnt the art to make it their profession.

Karan Palace was built by Maharaja Karan Singh (1631-1674). It is decorated with different design patterns in golden hue. The palace has an audience hall and separate room for coronation ceremony with a seat under the hand-pulled fan. The chiseled marble pillars in lustrous gold are adorned with foliage bases. The fine white plaster walls give an impression of white marble surface. The floors are laid in white marble. The ceiling in wood has been painted in stunning red and gold in geometric pattern. The walls are decorated with arabesques in green, yellow and red colours upto a height of 4 ft. The palace has heavy silver doors.

Phool Mahal (Flower Palace) is painted exquisitely in floral motif in striking red, silver and gold. A painted sculpture

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of a deity in marble is installed at the entrance of Phool Mahal. A silver cot of Rao Bika is flanked by *Mahi Martab**. The fabulous seat of Maharaja is embellished with cut-glass. The outer walls are also decorated red and green in floral motif with golden outline. The marble pillars are painted yellow and silver. The marble floor is laid out in floral and geometric design. One round table is ornamented with inlaid floral designs.

Badal Mahal (Cloud Palace) is a small room embellished with the murals of clouds in blue and white hues. The portraits of Maharaja adorn the walls. It was used as a music room for the Maharaja. A few musical instruments have been showcased.

Gaj Mandir has stunning interior. A beautiful swing (jhoola) of Lord Krishan in stunning gold stands in the veranda. The white plaster walls embedded with mirrors have also been painted red, yellow and silver in floral motif. The wooden ceiling is bright red and gold in geometric pattern. Each part of the interior is delicately designed and decorated in gold, silver, red and green colours. One small chamber is embellished with the murals of Lord Ram and Hanuman. The queens chambers are similarly decorated. The height of silver cot of Maharaja is too low to hide oneself under the cot.

Sur Mandir is adorned with blue tiles in floral design. Its white plaster walls are marginally decorated in green and red colours. Chandra Mahal is embellished with mirror work, frescoes and carved marble panels. Ganga Mahal displays some royal costumes, clothing and furniture. Maharaja Anup Singh had built the beautiful Anup Mahal in Mughal style. The excessive marble and glass work brightens up the interior in golden hue.

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* *Khusro, grandson of emperor Noshirwan of Iran got back his lost empire during the time when Moon was in Zodiac sign of Pisces. He considered the time an auspicious and built symbol of Fish and Moon and named it Mahi Maratab. The symbols built of silver and gold were mounted on masts. Mughal also adopted this practice and gave these symbols to the Maharaja of Rajputana. These symbols were given by the emperor to those of high status or honouring a person.*

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Rang Mahal is built of red sandstone with beautiful interior. Hawa Mahal is a small room on the upper storey with large stone screens on four sides. The interior is painted in foliage pattern. The latticed doors and windows are adorned with red, blue, green and yellow glasses.

Lalgarh Palace was built by Maharaja Ganga Singh in the memory of his father Lall Singh in 1902. It was finally completed in 1928 and the royal family shifted to Lalgarh palace from Junagarh fort. Lalgarh houses a museum containing photographic details, armoury, historical records etc. It is built of red sandstone with artistic lattice and filigree work. A British architecture Sir Swinton Jacob had designed this palace in Mughal, Rajput and European architecture. The palace consists of spacious halls with cupola roof supported on chiseled pillars. A part of the palace has been converted into a hotel being run by Welcom Group. 'Maharaja Sadul Singh Museum' houses a large collection of historic materials concerning the history of Bikaner.

Gajner palace is situated on the bank of a lake. It was a monsoon retreat of the ruler which has been converted into a heritage hotel.

Laxmi Niwas Palace was built by Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner. It was designed by British architect Sir Samuel Swinton Jacob in 1902. It has been converted into a heritage hotel owned by Golden Triangle Fort and Palace Pvt. Ltd. It is built in red sandstone and represents Indo-Saracenic architecture.

History

Rao Bika was succeeded by his eldest son, Lunkaran while the youngest one, Ghadsi founded the cities of Ghadsisar and Adsisar. Lunkaran weakened the power of Bhati rulers of Jaisalmer and annexed a part of their territory to Bikaner. After Lunkaran, Jait Singh seated on the throne. Jait Singh had three sons Kalyanmal, Shivji and Ashwapal. Kalyanmal, being the eldest inherited the throne after Jait Singh. He had three sons – Rai Singh, Ram Singh and Prithvi Singh. Rai Singh ascended

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the throne of Bikaner and expanded its territory like Lunkaran. Rai Singh was married to the daughter of Bhati Raja of Jaisalmer. One of his daughters was married to Mughal emperor Akbar from whom Parvez was born. The Mughals and Rathores had formed marital relations which benefited Rai Singh in becoming the general in the Mughal army during 1588-1593. When Akbar conquered Nagaur, he gave it to Rai Singh. Rai Singh commanded the Mughal army and subjugated Gujarat and Kabul. Akbar was greatly impressed with the heroism of Rai Singh over Gujarat and Kabul. The emperor conferred on him the title of 'Rao' and in turn Rai Singh got his daughter married to Salim, son of Akbar. Thus, Bikaner had become a powerful state under Mughal's supremacy.

Rai Singh died in 1632. Rai Singh had four sons – Dalpat Singh, Sursen, Kishan Singh and Bhupan Singh. Dalpat Singh ascended the throne of Bikaner followed by Sursen and Karan Singh. Karan Singh had not acknowledged the supremacy of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb sent Amir Khan with a large contingent to subdue Bikaner in 1660. Karan Singh did not find it sensible to respond against the large Mughal army and relented. Aurangzeb sent him for an offensive in the southern India in 1661. However, an arbitrary attitude of Karan Singh displeased Aurangzeb who removed him and install his son Anup Singh on the throne of Bikaner. Karan Singh was given jagir in the south where he died in 1669.

Anup Singh turned out to be an efficient and brave ruler. Mughal emperor gave him cavalry of 5000 horses and entrusted the charge of Aurangabad and Bijapur. He proved a powerful Mughal army commander who successfully conquered Kabul. Anup Singh died in 1709. He had two sons – Swarup Singh and Sujan Singh. Swarup Singh ascended the throne followed by his brother Sujan Singh. No battle was fought during their reign. Jorawar Singh seated on the throne in 1737 and reigned for 10 years. Gaj Singh came to the throne in 1747 and reigned for 40 years. He fought couple of battles against Bhatis and Muslim rulers of Bahawalpur and expanded territory of his

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kingdom. Raj Singh, son of Gaj Singh ascended the throne but he was poisoned by his stepmother who wanted her son Surat Singh to become the ruler. Raj Singh had two sons, Pratap Singh and Jai Singh. Surat Singh enthroned Raj Singh's son as prince regent. Later, Surat Singh killed his nephew and he came to the throne. He plundered Bhatner and Bahawalpur. He set himself a cruel ruler among public and the feudalists. He levied taxes to fill up his treasure.

British government had subjugated most of the Rajputana by 1818. Surat Singh too signed a treaty with British government. He died in 1824. His son Ratan Singh ascended the throne. After him, his son Sardar Singh came to the throne in 1852. Maharaja Sardar Singh died childless in 1872. Dungar Singh was adopted as next heir. Bikaner became the district of Rajasthan which merged into India in 1949.

Maharaja Rai Singhji Trust, Junagarh, Bikaner

Founded by Maharaja Dr. Karan Singh-II Bahadur of Bikaner on October 19, 1961.

Objectives

1. To grant scholarships for educational purposes;
2. To collect, maintain and preserve manuscripts, paintings and arts including objects of arts and archives for the purpose of advancement of education and to maintain and preserve national and historical monuments;
3. To carry on research work and to open research laboratories;
4. To impart education;
5. To provide facilities and help in physical training and sports of all kinds including shooting, sports;
6. To organize sports;
7. To help or create dramatic societies, dances or other cultural activities;
8. To give aid to such institutions and impart physical training;
9. To establish and regulate libraries and to give aid to them;

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10. To preserve the old and important objects and to set up museums;
11. To amalgamate such trusts as are conducive to the objects hereinbefore mentioned
12. To accept donations, gifts, settlements and endowments of both moveable and immoveable properties for all or any of the above objects even if such gifts, donations, settlements and endowments are conditional;
13. If for any of the above purposes in future, the founder, any of the trustee or any public man transfers and donates any moveable or immoveable property to this trust, the same may be accepted subject to the terms and conditions of such transfers which may be expressly contained in such transfer deeds; proved all the above objects are of public.

Tourist attractions around Bikaner

Lalgarh Palace is 2 km from Junagarh. Ganga Government Museum has collection of weapons, carpets, coins, terracotta wares, miniature paintings of Bikaner school. **Laxminath temple** was originally built by Rao Bika in 1488. Rao Lunkaran got constructed the present structure of this temple. **Shiv Bari temple** was built by Raja Dungar Singh in red sandstone in late 19th century. The temple houses the image of Lord Shiv in black marble and Nandi in bronze metal. It has two large baoris. **Kolayat** temple is dedicated to Kapil Muni who is said to have meditated over here near the lake. It is 50 km from Bikaner. **Karni Mata** temple is 30 km from Bikaner. The 600 years old temple is dedicated to the incarnation of goddess Durga. Its huge carved silver gates were donated by Maharaja Ganga Singh. The temple has large population of rats which are regarded as sacred and fed by the priests and devotees. **Gajner wildlife sanctuary** is 32 km from Bikaner inhabitated by Chinkara, black buck, wild boar, Nilgai and sand grouse. Camel festival is held at Bikaner annually in January. The best season to visit Bikaner is from October to March.

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Fort of Nagaur

The fort of Nagaur is situated in Nagaur city at 27°12' north latitude and 73°44' east longitude in central part of Rajasthan. Nagaur city was founded by Kaimas, a feudal lord during the reign of Someshwar Chauhan in 1154 AD. The city is enclosed by 50 ft. high red sandstone wall with six gates - Jodhpuri gate, Ajmeri gate, Nakash gate, Mahi gate, Naya gate and Delhi gate. The river Luni flows through Nagaur district which has total area of 17,718 sq. km with two lakes Deedwana and Sambhar. Nagaur can be reached from Jaipur (287 km), Jodhpur (138 km) and Udaipur (400 km) which are on the Indian Airlines routes that links Delhi to Mumbai

The ground level Nagaur fort is surrounded by a deep moat. The fort covers an area of 2100 square yards enclosed by two-layer of rampart consisting of 28 rectangular as well as semi-circular bastions. One rampart is 25 ft. high while the other is 50 ft. high pierced with gun points. The fort has four towers. The fort is accessible through six gateways—Sirai pole, Bichli pole, Kachehri pole, Suraj pole, Dhuli pole and Raj pole. The main entrance is flanked by huge bastion on either side. Mughal emperor Akbar built a fountain in the courtyard. The fort houses palaces, temples, mosque, baoris and wells.

Zanana Mahal (Woman Palace) is embellished with frescoes. Moti Mahal and Hawa Mahal are ornamented with Mughal-Rajput art. Sheesh Mahal glitters with cut-glass in different design patterns. The carved painted cornices and miniature paintings of Mughal period adorn the interior. Badal Mahal is decorated with paintings depicting scenes of royal durbar, monsoon, nature and women in Rajputani attire. The bathrooms have white marble interior. The hall of public audience is decorated with exquisite murals. The two-storey palaces of Bakht Singh and queen of Rao Amar Singh are decorated with murals. The windows and stone screens of these palaces are in Mughal style. Baradari of 36 pillars has beautiful frescoes and murals.

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History

According to Persian historical literature Tavkatnasiri, the fort of Nagaur was built by Muhammad Behlin of Gajni. In 1112 AD, Sultan Behramshah of Gajni sent his governor Muhammad Behlin to India for offensive action. Muhammad Behlin captured Nagaur and declared himself an independent ruler. Sultan killed Muhammad Behlin and appointed Salar Hussain in his place. Salar Hussain was pulled down by Arnoraj Chauhan and brought Nagaur under his control. Arnoraj was killed by his son Jagdev to inherit the throne. He was succeeded by Vigrehraj, also known as Beesaldev. Raja Kumarpal of Chalukya dynasty attacked Nagaur but faced defeat from Beesaldev. Mohd. Ghauri defeated Prithviraj in 1192 and captured Ajmer including Nagaur. Iltumish and Balban continued to retain their hold over Nagaur till it was annexed to Marwar by Rao Chunda in 1406. Muzzafarshah of Gujarat snatched it from Rathores in 1408 and appointed his brother Shams Khan as governor of Nagaur. Rao Ranmal, son of Rao Chunda conquered Nagaur from Shams Khan in 1427. It again fell into the hands of Muslims in 1447 until it was captured by Rana Kumbha. Thereafter, joint Muslim army of Gujarat and Malwa attacked Nagaur but Rana Kumbha repelled the attack vigorously. Later, Rao Bika of Bikaner occupied it from Muslim ruler Muhammad Shah. In 1532, Raja Maldev of Marwar conquered Nagaur, Merta and Phalodi. Shershah Suri defeated Maldev in 1542 and subjugated his entire territory. After the death of Shershah Suri, Nagaur remained under the possession of Hazi Khan, a Subedar of Ajmer. Mughal emperor Akbar took control of it in 1556. Raja Amar Singh of Jodhpur commanded Mughal army in many expeditions and embraced victory. In recognition of his loyalty, Shahjahan awarded him with the jagir of Nagaur in 1638. When Amar Singh slew Salawat Khan in the Mughal court on some petty matter, Shahjahan sentenced him death penalty and the jagir of Nagaur was transferred to his son, Rai Singh. Later, Aurangzeb occupied it. Then, Raja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur conquered it from Mughals. After the death of Aurangzeb in

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1707, Bahadurshah succeeded to the throne. He overthrew the Rathores and brought their state under his control. Thereafter, Marwar and Jaipur joined hands together against Mughals and recaptured their lost territories. Marwar entered into a treaty with British government in 1803 and Nagaur remained secure as part of Marwar till India got freedom in 1947 and finally Nagaur became a full-fledged district of Rajasthan.

Tourist attractions around Nagaur

Cattle Fair is held annually for 8 days at Nagaur during the month of January-February. The cows, buffalos, camels and oxen are brought from far off places of Rajasthan in this fair. The camel and bull races are popular sports of Nagaur. The Rajathani folk dance and music is attraction of the fair. The 15th century Dargah of Sufi saint Kazi is situated in Nagaur town. It is also called **Tarkin ki Dargah.** Hamiduddin came to India with Mohd. Gauri and was appointed Kazi of Nagaur. **Khimsar** fort is 45 km from the city. It has been converted into a heritage hotel. The 15th century **Bansiwale ka Mandir** and 17th century **Brahmini Mata Temple** are in the town.

Fort of Jalore

The fort of Jalore is perched on top of 1200 ft. high Swarngiri mountain in the Jalore town at 25°21′ north latitude and 72°43′ east longitude in western part of Rajasthan. It is bounded by Barmer in the northwest, Pali in the northeast, Sirohi in the southeast and Gujarat state in the southwest. The river Sukri, a tributary of Luni River, flows through the Jalore district. Jalore was known as Jabalipur in the ancient time after the name of Maharishi Jabali who lived here as seer. Jalore was also called Swarngiri and the fort Songarh after its golden mountain. The total area of the district is 10,640 sq. km. Jalore is 145 km from Jodhpur and 418 km from Jaipur, connected by rail/road network.

The fort is accessed through four huge gateways – Suraj Pole, Dhruv Pole, Chand Pole and Sirohi Pole. A 5-km

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serpentine ascent from the base of the hill ends at Suraj pole, the main entrance of the fort wherefrom it unfolds a spectacular view of Jalore town. The guard rooms over Suraj Pole were meant to mount a vigil round the fort. The fort is 800 yards in length and 400 yards in breadth. Its 25 ft. high and 15 ft. thick wall consists of several bastions. The fort complex houses palaces, two-storey Rani Palace, Jain temples, temple of Chamunda Devi, mosques, stable, stores for food grains, soldiers' residence, gun foundry, baoris, water tanks viz. Jabalikund and Sohanbar. The building housing the foundry is in depleted condition. The mosque of Sultan Muzaffar Shah embodies Gujarati architecture. The fort houses tombs of Muslim saints Malik Shah and Rehman Ali Baba. Most of the structures in the fort are in ruins.

Two Jain temples built in white marble have been dedicated to Adinath, Mahavir, Parsavnath and Shantinath. Shantinath temple and Mahavir temple date back to 13th and 14th century respectively. Temple of Lord Shiv is conspicuous due to its high pinnacle. Another temple houses the images of goddesses Amba and Ashapuri along with Lord Hanuman.

History

Pratihar ruler Nagbhat-I defeated Gurjars of Jalore and earned the epithet of Gurjar Pratihars. He built a fort on the Swarngiri mountain. Jalore fell into the hands of Parmar rulers of Malwa who ruled till the end of 11th century AD. Parmars were overcome by Chalukyas of Gujarat as their feudatories. Thereafter, Chauhans reigned over Jalore and were called Songar Chauhans when Kirtipala of Nadol brought Jalore under his control. Kirtipala was succeeded by his son, Samar Singh. He introduced a few changes in the fort and installed cannons. Udai Singh, son of Samar Singh was an efficient and great warrior who expanded the territories of his kingdom. He defeated Iltumish of Delhi Sultanate in 1273. He foiled the second attempt of Iltumish to capture Jalore in 1278. After Udai Singh, Samant Singh and his son Kanhad Dev too fought battles against Muslim forces. Allauddin Khilji of Delhi Sultanate was passing through Jalore after plundering Somnath temple in Gujarat in

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1298. The Rajput troops attacked the Muslim army at Jalore and put them to heavy losses. Allauddin sent a large army under the command of Kamaluddin to subdue Jalore in 1311. The Muslim army laid siege to the fort for 2-3 years. The protracted siege resulted into shortage of food grains. Muslim army allured one of Rajput soldiers to their side and enabled to enter into the fort through a secret passage. A fierce battle took place between Rajputs and Muslim army in which Kanhad Dev and his son Viramdev lost their lives along with several Rajput soldiers. The Rajput women performed *jauhar*. The reign of Songar Chauhans came to an end. Tughlaks came to power at Delhi after the fall of Khilji Sultanate and Jalore went into the hands of Gyasuddin Tughlak in 1320. Thereafter, Raja Maldev of Marwar snatched it from Muslims. After the death of Maldev, Pathans occupied Jalore. Later in 1607, Maharaja Gaj Singh of Jodhpur got it back from the Pathans.

Small Forts of Marwar

Fort of Siwana, Barmer

The fort of Siwana was built by Veernarayan, son of Raja Bhoj of Parmar clan in the 10th century A.D. The fort is perched on the 1050 ft. high hill in Siwana city of Barmer district. Barmer was founded by Bhimoji Rathore in 1552 AD. The fort is enclosed by high and strong rampart consisting of bastions and towers. It houses the cenotaph of Kalla. The fort is in ruins. The fort of Siwana is about 20 km from Samadari railway station and 588 km from Jaipur.

Allauddin Khilji attacked Siwana in 1310 AD during Chauhan's regime. Sataldev along with Rajput soldiers performed *kesariya* in which a large number of Muslims killed. Allauddin captured the fort and appointed a Muslim governor. After the death of Allauddin Khilji, Rathore Jaitmal overthrew the Muslim governor and occupied the fort. Mughal emperor Akbar conquered Siwana from Rathores in 1574 after protracted siege of two years. Aurangzeb removed Kalyandas Kalla from Siwana and brought the state under his control.

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Fort of Kilon, Barmer

Bhimoji Rathore built Kilon fort on the 676 ft. high hill in Barmer district. The fort is surrounded by small hills which provided an added protection to the stronghold. He also built five Kotris for his five sons in the fort. Padam Singh built Padam Mahal in the fort. The fort houses temples dedicated to Yogmaya, Gagdamba and Nagnechiya. Rawat Lal Singh built four Kotris in the fort one of which is occupied by present royal family.

Fort of Kotrah

It is located at Sheo tehsil of Barmer district. It was built by Parmar rulers of Kiradu. The fort has a well named Sargala. It is 65 km from Barmer city and presently in ruins.

Tourist attractions around Barmer

Three days Thar festival is held at village Kiradu, 38 km from Barmer. The folk artists outside the district also perform in the festival. Camal riding and camel polo are made available on the occasion at Mahabar village, 5 km from Barmer. A night cultural programme is also organized which is full of Rajasthani melody of dance and music. Gair dance of Marwar is performed at Kanana village. Shri Nakoda Jain temple at Balotra is enshrined with the idol of Parsavnath. *Chhatri* of 18th century saint Ramdas is located at village Akali, 55 km from Barmer. Chandrika temple at Sheo is surrounded by sand dunes.

Bhatner Fort, Hanumangarh

Bhatner fort is situated on the bank of river Ghaggar in Hanumangarh city at 29°33' north latitude and 74°21' east longitude in the northern part of Rajasthan. It is bounded by Punjab state in the north, Ganganagar in the northwest, Bikaner in the southwest, Churu in the south and Haryana state in the east. Hanumangarh, the district headquarters is connected by rail and road network. It is 447 km from Jaipur and 230 km from Bikaner.

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Bhatner fort is masonry work of bricks and lime mortar. Its high and strong rampart consists of 52 bastions. The images of Bhati Raja and his six queens have been engraved in stone at the entrance gate. The fort houses temples of Lord Hanuman, Lord Shiv, Lord Krishan, and goddess Karni Mata.

Raja Bhati ruled over a large territory with capital at Lahore during 3rd century AD. He was succeeded by his son Bhupat. Bhupat was ousted by the ruler of Gajni making him to flee to Ghaggar valley where he built a fort on the bank of river Ghaggar in 295 AD in the memory of his father and named it Bhatner. Raja Narpat Bhati recaptured Lahore and reigned for a few decades until ousted by the joint forces of Iran and Khorasan in 474 AD. Panwar Rajputs captured Bhatner from Bhatis in 645 AD. Abhayraj Bhati of Lahore founded Abohar city and his descendents were called Abohariya Bhatis who had embraced Islam. Abohariya Bhatis captured Bhatner and reigned till 1270. Balban of Delhi Sultanate attacked Bhatner in 1270 and appointed his cousin Sher Khan, as governor of Bhatner. The tomb of Sher Khan is built in the fort. Bhati Rajputs recaptured Bhatner from Muslims in 1360 and reigned till 1398. Taimur attacked Bhatner and plundered the city in 1398. Many were killed, women were maltreated and kidnapped. Taimur appointed Chigtai Khan, as governor of Bhatner. However, Chigtai was pulled down by Bhati army but later the Bhati ruler was dislodged from the seat with the help of Delhi Sultanate.

In 1527, Maharaja Jait Singh of Bikaner annexed Bhatner to his state. Thereafter, Mughals took control of Bhatner in 1534. Akbar awarded Bhatner to Raja Raisingh of Bikaner in 1580 and then to his son, Dalpat Singh. Hyat Khan Bhati of Fatehabad defeated Dalpat Singh in 1614 who later died at Ajmer. His wives committed sati in the fort. Maharaja Sujan Singh of Bikaner annexed Bhatner to his state. Jabta Khan Bhati occupied it from Rathores. Maharaja Surat Singh of Bikaner launched an attack on Bhatner and captured it from Jabta Khan in 1804. Surat Singh named it Hanumangarh after the day of his victory i.e. Tuesday (a day of Lord Hanuman).

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Kalibanga Archaeological Museum at Hanumangarh gives an insight into the ancient civilization flourished in the region. Gogaji fair and Goga Medo are annual fairs of Hanumangarh.

Gajner Palace, Gajner (Bikaner)

Gajner Palace was built by Maharaja Ganga Singh of Bikaner on the edge of a lake. It was converted into a heritage hotel in 1976. The overhanging balconies and the beautiful terraces are eye-catching. The hotel is built over a land of 6000 acres. The palace was a hunting lodge during British period and visited by several dignitaries of British government including Prince of Wales in 1905, Governor General Lord Elgin, Lord Erwin in 1927 and Lord Mountbatten. The Palace primarily consists of Dungar Niwas, Mandir Chowk, Gulab Niwas and Champa Niwas. The palace hotel has 13 suites in Dungar Niwas where British dignitaries stayed. Each suite is restored to its original majesty. The interior and furniture decoration reflects historic royal taste. The hotel has 32 deluxe rooms in Gulab Niwas, Champa Niwas and Mandir Chowk.

Bhanwar Niwas, Bikaner

Bhanwar Niwas was a haveli built by Seth Bhanwarlal Rampuria in the early 20th century. It is built of red sandstone. The façade shows the arcaded corridors resting on sandstone pillars. The rooms are beautifully decorated in different hues and themes equipped with modern amenities. Its baori is converted into a bar. It has been converted into a hotel which has 12 double bed rooms and 2 single bed rooms. It is 15 kms from the Bikaner railway station and 320 kms from Jaipur.

Mann Bilas Palace, Bikaner

The Mann Bilas Palace is 5 kms from Bikaner railway station. It is ground level structure situated within the Lalgarh Palace. It has 10 super deluxe richly decorated rooms equipped with modern amenities. The mansion is painted red from outside. It has spacious lawn where the Rajasthani folk dance and music are performed at night.

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Bhairon Vilas Palace, Bikaner

Bhairon Vilas Palace was built by Maharaja Bhairon Singh in 1872. It is situated near the Junagarh fort. The image of Hindu deity Bhairon is also enshrined in this palace. Many important dignitaries have visited Bhairon Vilas including viceroys and Governor General of India, Lord Themsford, Lord Hardinge, Lord Curzon. etc. It was originally a Haveli now converted into heritage hotel consisting of 18 rooms decorated in different themes. The latticed windows add tradition to the architecture against the modern life style. It is 6 kms from Bikaner railway station.

Karni Bhawan Palace, Bikaner

Maharaja Dr. Karni Singh of Bikaner built the Karni Bhawan Palace in the Art Deco style. The palace is erected amidst the spacious lawn. Being the modern construction, the architecture is quite different from others. It consists of 15 spacious rooms equipped with all modern amenities. The palace is painted white and red from outside. The interior is elegantly decorated with murals and portraits of Rajput rulers. It is 5 kms from Bikaner railway station.

Jawahar Niwas Palace, Jaisalmer

Maharawal Shalivahan Singh of Jaisalmer laid the foundation of Jawahar Niwas Palace in 1899. The palace is masonry work of yellow sandstone which has been carved artistically in making the latticed windows, floral arches, chiseled pillars and domes. Jawahar Niwas Palace has been converted into a Hotel by the present Maharawal Brijraj Singh. The hotel has 22 rooms decorated beautifully in traditional style of different themes. It is about 2 kms from Jaisalmer railway station. The half of the building is a heritage hotel and the half is occupied by the royal family.

Narain Niwas Palace, Jaisalmer

The 19th century Narain Niwas Palace has been converted into a luxurious heritage hotel. The two storey mansion is beautiful and elegant in architecture. The rooms are similarly

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decorated. It has 43 air conditioned rooms designed and decorated in different colours and themes. It has been the residence of the royal family of Jaisalmer and is 3 kms from railway station.

Hotel Jaisal Castle, Jaisalmer

The hotel Jaisal Castle is a huge ancient haveli located in the narrow street. It is 5 storeyed mansion decorated with beautiful murals and has 20 air-conditioned rooms. It also belonged to Narain Niwas Palace and had been the royal residence. It is 2 kms from the railway station.

Nachna Haveli, Jaisalmer

It has been the royal residence of the royal family of Jaisalmer kingdom now converted into the heritage hotel. The hotel is equipped with all modern amenities.

Fort Pokaran, Jaisalmer

The 14th century Fort Pokaran is built of red sandstone reflecting Rajput and Mughal architecture. The traditional jharokhas, parapets and turret have been carved executively in sandstone. The Mangal Mahal and Durbal Hall reflects good architecture with four octagonal jharokhas. The present Thakur Nagendra Singh Pokaran and his wife Thakurani Yashwant Kumari Pokaran converted it into heritage hotel. The hotel has Museum which has collection of armoury, garments, miniature paintings, handicrafts and the local artistry of the royal family. The Grand Library in the hotel have classic books dedicated to the great Rao Bhadur Rajshree Thakur Chain Singh Pokaran. The hotel has 19 air-conditioned rooms including 6 suites.

Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur

Ajit Bhawan Palace was built for Maharaja Ajit Singh, the younger brother of Maharaja Umaid Singh of the erstwhile Jodhpur state. A part the mansion has been converted into heritage hotel and the remaining portion is still occupied by the royal family. Each suite is decorated keeping in mind the

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royal taste with luxurious marble bathrooms with all modern amenities. The old photographs and antiques of the erstwhile state has also been displayed in the palace. The hotel has 50 rooms and suites. It is 8 kms from the railway station.

Hotel Balsamand Lake Palace, Jodhpur

The 16th century Balsamand Lake Palace is built amidst the 300 acres of green valley overlooking the 12th century man made Balsamand lake and the sprawling gardens. It had been the summer capital of erstwhile Marwar State. The palace is masonry work of red sandstone and marble representing Rajput architecture. Maharaja Gaj Singh II developed it into a Heritage Holiday Spa and Retreat in 1996. The hotel has 26 deluxe rooms and 9 suites equipped with modern amenities. The interior is decorated with Rajasthan art and antiques. It is 12 kms from airport and 7 kms from railway station.

Jhalamand Garh, Jodhpur

The Jhalamand Garh was the royal residence of Jhalamand family and is being run and managed by the royal family itself. It is located in the rural area affording the traditional Rajput culture. The hotel organizes folk dance and music including the most popular Kabeliya in the evening. The mansion is Rajput in architecture crowned with domed kiosks on corner. It has 93 standard rooms, 3 meeting rooms and 2 board rooms with modern amenities. It is 4 kms from airport.

Hotel Karni Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur

Hotel Karni Bhawan Palace was a former residence of the feudal lords of Sodawas Bhati Rajputs. It is built in red sandstone and has been converted into a heritage hotel. It provides 31 luxury air-conditioned/air-cooled rooms and suites which have been decorated in different Rajasthani themes. It is 4 kms from railway station and 3 kms from airport.

Maharani Bagh Orchard Retreat, Jodhpur

Maharani Bagh was laid out by Maharaja Takhat Singh for his Maharani in the late 19th century and has been a favorite

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resort for royal family of Jodhpur. It is only 4 kms away from the famous Ranakpur Temples, 40 kms from the Kumbalgarh Fort and 65 kms from Jodhpur airport. It is surrounded by the Aravalli hills. It is being managed by Welcom Heritage hotels. It has 19 luxurious air-conditioned rooms.

Ranbanka Palace, Jodhpur

The Ranbanka Palace was built for Maharaja Ajit Singh, the younger brother of Maharaja Umaid Singh. It is masonry work of sandstone and marble. The interior is decorated in royal style and taste with wall paintings, antiques, colonial furniture, Persian carpets and hunting trophies. A part of the building is still being used by the royal family. The hotel has 30 palatial air-conditioned rooms equipped with modern amenities. It is 5 kms from railway station and 2 kms from airport.

Ratan Vilas, Jodhpur

Ratan Vilas was built for Maharaja Ratan Singh of Jodhpur in red sandstone. It is now heritage hotel. The rooms and interior are decorated in royal taste with display of collection of paintings, hunting trophies, antiques, Persian carpets and colonial furniture. A part of the building is still the home of the royal family. The hotel has 16 rooms. It is 3 kms from railway station and 2 kms from airport.

Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur

The magnificent and impressive Umaid Bhawan Palace Jodhpur is situated at the heart of Jodhpur city. Some of the royal household items are still used in the hotel. The theme dinners are organized in the Dal Badal, a 100 year old intricately designed hunting tent in the palace in winter. The hotel also offers daily buffet lunch and dinner at Marwar Hall. The hotel has 94 rooms and suites decorated nicely with royal taste and touch with colonial furniture. The Regal Suites was originally used by Maharaja Umaid Singh and his Maharani. The musical fountains made of English Crystal in the suites are awesome. It is 6 kms from railway station and 5 kms from airport.

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Rohetgarh Fort, Jodhpur

Rohetgarh fort is located in village Rohet at a distance of 40 kms from Jodhpur. Maharaja of Jodhpur bestowed upon the jagir of Rohet to Thakur Dalpat Singh-I of Champawat clan in 1622 in appreciation of his bravery in the battle. Thakur Dalpat Singh laid the foundation of the fort which were further expanded and developed by his successors. The fort is masonry work of sandstone, marble and lime mortar and decorated with frescoes and murals in Rajasthani art. The carved archways in stone are eye catching. The carved wooden ceiling, lamps, old photographs and historic artifacts in the drawing room reminds one of the Rajput period. The verandah has been decorated with some historic objects and trophies. The fort was converted as heritage hotel in 1990 which has 26 air-conditioned rooms with attached bathrooms and 2 suites with all modern facilities. The rooms have been furnished in different themes in Rajput style of art and architecture. The swimming pool is flanked by four pavilions at each corner where the Rajasthani folk dance and music are performed in the evening.

Fort Chanwa Luni, Jodhpur

Maharaja Jaswant Singh-II of Jodhpur bestowed upon the jagir of a small village Chanwa to his able administrator Kaviraj Muraridan in 1894, where the latter built a magnificent Haveli presently known as Fort Chanwa Luni. Kaviraj had no male heir, therefore in 1948, the jagir of Chanwa was transferred to Maharaja Dalip Singh, the youngest son of Maharaja Umaid Singh of Jodhpur. The fort remained unused and deserted for a long time until in 1992 when it was converted into a heritage hotel as many such historic buildings were being converted into hotels for good business. The fort is in red sandstone. The intricate latticework and jharokas are the architectural features of the monument. The hotel has 31 well furnished rooms decorated beautifully in Rajasthani art and tradition with antique wooden furnishings. It is 36 kms from railway station.

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Sardar Samand Lake Resort, Pali

Sardar Samand Lake Resort is situated on the hill looking below the large Sardar Samand Lake. It was built by Maharaja Umaid Singh as hunting lodge in 1933. It was designed by architect George Goldstraw. It has been converted into heritage hotel and has 12 rooms and a multicuisine restaurant. It is 65 kms southwest of Jodhpur.

Fort of Sojat, Pali

The fort of Sojat is situated on the bank of Sukri river in Sojat city of Pali district. It is 110 km from Jodhpur. Sojat is named after the deity, Sejal Mata. The city is enclosed by a high wall consisting of seven gateways - Jodhpuri darwaja, Raj darwaja, Jaitaran darwaja, Nagauri darwaja, Chavand pole, Rampole and Jalori darwaja. The fort is accessed through Suraj pole and Chand pole. Chauhans conquered the fort from Rathores in 1460 AD and further expanded it. Raja Maldev of Jodhpur added some apartments in the fort. Sojat remained under the control of Parmars, Songar Chauhans, Solankis, Sisodias, Rathores and Mughals. Mughal emperor Akbar conquered Sojat from Chandrasen and gave it to Rao Ram, son of Raja Maldev. Rao Ram built a pond Ramelao in the fort. Thereafter, it remained under the control of Rathores.

Fort of Malkota, Nagaur

Malkota fort was built by Raja Maldev of Jodhpur in 1510 AD. It is situated in Merta city in Nagaur district. The fort houses a few temples and mosques. It is now in depleted condition. It is 300 km from Jaipur.

Fort of Kuchaman, Nagaur

The Fort of Kuchaman is situated on a 1000 ft. high hill in the Kuchaman town of Nagaur district. It is 145 km from the district headquarters Nagaur. Legend has it that Jalim Singh Mertia had laid the foundation of the fort in 9th century AD on the advice of a hermit who lived in the vicinity of the mountains. The fort was further developed by his successors.

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Some believed that Gaur rulers had built this fort which was expanded and renovated by Jalim Singh. A circular ascent from the base of the hill leads to the fort through Chand pole, Suraj pole, Kashmiri pole, Paltan pole, Hod pole and Bari pole. Its rampart has 18 strong bastions. A canal below the fort provided it an additional defence. The fort houses Rani Mahal, Sheesh Mahal, Hawa Mahal, Havelis, armoury, stores for food grains, temples and five water reservoirs. The interior of the palaces is adorned with beautiful frescoes depicting the scenes of nature and deities. Rani Mahal and Sheesh Mahal are decorated with murals. Hawa Mahal embodies Rajput architecture. Kuchaman city is a small railway station on Jaipur-Jodhpur rail route. Kuchaman is also known for its fabulous Havelis, Kothis and temples. It is now a heritage hotel.

Kuchaman, a small town in district Nagaur, was ruled by Gaur Kshatriya. Rathore ruler Raghunath Singh Mertia defeated the Gaurs of Kuchaman in 1658 and annexed its territory to Jodhpur. Maharaja Abhay Singh awarded Jalim Singh Mertia, the grandson of Raghunath Singh, with the jagir of Kuchaman. The nobles and feudalists of Kuchaman were dedicated to Marwar and accompanied them during their all expeditions.

Khimsar Fort, Nagaur

The Khimsar fort was built by Rao Karan Singh in 1523 who founded the royal dynasty of Khimsar. It is still the royal residence of Khimsar family. It has been converted into a Welcom Heritage hotel and was awarded the 'Grand Heritage Award for Excellence' by the Department of Tourism, Government of India in 1997-98. It has 50 luxurious air-conditioned rooms and suites. The fort is 45 kms from Nagaur city, 90 kms from Jodhpur and 287 kms. from Jaipur.

Fort of Sirohi

The fort of Sirohi was built by Raja Devda Sahasmal. Raja Shivbhan founded the city Shivpuri in 1405 and his son, Sahasmal founded Sirohi near Shivpuri in 1425. The Sirohi

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district has total area of 5136 sq. km situated between 24°15′ & 27°17′ north latitude and 72°16′ & 73°10′ east longitude in southern pat of Rajasthan. Sirohi is situated at an altitude of 1220 metres above sea level, bounded by Pali in the north, Jalore in the west, Udaipur in the east and Gujarat state in the south.

The fort is accessed through Ganesh pole adorned with the image of Lord Ganesh. Its double rampart encircles the fort. A few cannons are displayed at Singh pole. The fort houses Dewan-i-khas, Zanana Mahal, Jhali Rani ka Mahal, Baori, Chariot, Phool Gaukh, fabulous throne, stables, well and temples. Dewan-i-khas is built of white marble and embellished with lattice work, frescoes and murals in sparkling colours. The coloured cut-glass is also used in decorating the interior. The doors and windows have been carved beautifully. Zanana Mahal shows murals of Krishan Leela, assembly of Rain-goddess Indra, Shiv Durbar etc. The family deities of Devaras are enshrined in one of the temples. A coronation platform in the fort was meant for enthronement ceremony of rulers of Sirohi.

Achalgarh Fort, Mount Abu (Sirohi)

Abu fort or Achalgarh is situated on the hill at an altitude of 1220 metres above sea level in Sirohi district. Guru Shikar is the highest peak (1722 m) of Aravalli in Sirohi district in the southern part of Rajasthan. Mount Abu is a hill station at a distance of 185 km from Udaipur, 27 km from Abu Road Railway station and 595 km from Jaipur.

Parmars are believed to have constructed this fort in 10th century AD. Chandrawati in Abu valley was the capital of Parmar rulers. Rana Kumbha of Mewar renewed it in 1452 by adding more mansions in the fort. A winding metalled road through the hills leads high upto the fort unfolding an overview of Abu town surrounded by Nakki lake. Achaleshwar Mahadev temple comes on the way to fort. Achalgarh Mahadev was the family deity of Parmar Rajputs. The 15th century temple is enshrined with an image

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of toe of Lord Shiv instead of usual Shiv Ling. A brass sculpture of Nandi (bull) is also enshrined in the sanctum flanked by sculptured image of Dursa Aada. Dursa Aada was a poet in the Mughal court. Rao Surtan had granted asylum and jagir to Dursa. The image of Raja Kanhaddev is also enshrined in the temple. A Trishul in the temple was offered by Rana Lakha. Mandakini kund, 900 ft. long and 240 ft. wide water reservoir, is situated near the temple flanked by a memorial of Maharao Mansingh.

The fort is accessed through Ganesh pole, Hanuman pole, Champa pole and Bhairav pole. The fort has strong and high rampart. The fort complex houses palace of Auka Rani, Jain temples, Sawan-Bhadon pond, temple of Chamunda devi, Gomti kund, store rooms, soldiers' quarters and water tanks. The Jain temple is carved beautifully. Kantinath Jain temple was built in 1513. This fort too fell into the hands of Pamars, Solankis, Sultans of Gujarat and Malwa, Chauhans and Gehlots.

Kesar Bhawan Palace was built by Maharaja Daivat Singh of Sirohi for his guests in the middle of 19th century. It has been converted into a heritage hotel, equipped with solar system.

Palanpur Palace, Mt Abu

Palanpur Palace was built by Nawab Sher Mohammed Khan of Palanpur state over hundred years back. His son Nawab Taley Mohammed Khan made it a summer Palace. Currently Iqabal Mohammmed Khan developed and furnished it in modern style. Nawab Taley Mohammed Khan converted a part of the Palace into a hotel from 1923 to 1936. The façade of the palace is quite impressing with tiers of arcaded corridor and the round balconies on the corners. The palace affords a panoramic view of the town of Mt. Abu. The hotel has 51 rooms including 8 beautifully designed and traditionally decorated suites, and 43 are air-conditioned double rooms. It is 1.5 kms from bus stand and 1 km from Nakki Lake.

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Cama Rajputana club Resort, Mt. Abu

The Cama Rajputana Club belonged to the royal family who donated it over 100 years back to develop it for commercial use. It is situated very ideally amidst the hills and afforded a very picturesque landscape. It has been converted into a five star hotel with 40 double rooms, 2 suites and 10 independent cottages. It is 225 kms from Udaipur and 25 kms from Abu Road.

Connaught House, Mt. Abu

The Connaught House is situated at Mt. Abu which has been the official summer residence of Sir Donald Field, Chief Minister of the Princely State of Jodhpur. This building is still owned by the Maharaja of Jodhpur. It has been converted into a heritage hotel having 14 rooms decorated elegantly with modern amenities. It 185 kms from Udaipur and 15 kms from Abu Road.

Kesar Bhawan Palace, Mt. Abu

Kesar Bhawan Palace was built in 1868 and belonged to Maharao Kumar Daivat Singh of Sirohi, descendant of Maharao Lumbha who conquered the hill of Mt. Abu in 1311. Kesar Bhawan was used as the guesthouse for the visiting dignitaries from British government and the princely states. The palace has a closed corridor around it. The rooms are very cozy having balcony in each room offering an awesome view of the valley. The hotel has 10 double rooms with attached bathrooms.

The Palace Hotel (Bikaner House), Mt. Abu

Bikaner House was the summer residence of the royal family of Bikaner. It is very picturesquely situated on the hill. It was constructed in 1893 by Maharaja Ganga Singh and designed by the architect Sir Swinton Jacob. Maharaja Karni Singh converted it into a heritage hotel in 1962. The palace is crowned with open arched balcony and the domed kiosks. Its conference hall has the sitting capacity of 150 persons. The hotel has 13 suites, 24 double rooms and 1 single room.

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Tourist attractions at Abu

Eleventh century **Dilwara Jain Temple** consists of five Jain temples carved exquisitely in white marble and dedicated to Jain Tirthankar - Shri Adi Nathji, Shri Nemi Nathji, Shri Rishabh Deoji, Shri Parshav Nathji, Shri Mahaveer Swamiji. Vimal Vasahi Temple, dedicated to first Tirthankar, is two and a half kilometres from Mount Abu. It was built in 1031 AD by a Gujarati merchant Vimal Shah. **Gaumukh Temple** is 4 km from the town. Gaumukh, the cow's mouth carved out of marble, from which a stream flows out. It is also said to be the site of so called ancient *'Agnikund'* from which the Rajput clan of Agnikul born.

Nakki lake is situated at the heart of the town. It derives its name from 'Nakh' means 'Nail' believed to be formed from depth of the earth by the god. The lake reflects blue colour. Adhar Devi Temple is 2 km north of the town. The temple is dedicated to Arbuda, a serpent who saved Nandi of Shiv from being landed into the earth bed. Trevors Tank was built by a British engineer of the same name. It is 5 km from the town. A temple of Shiv and Dattatreya is built on Guru Shikhar. It is 15 km from the town. Honeymoon Point and Sunset Point are 2-3 km within the town. The best season to visit Abu is from March to October.

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Mewar Region

Chittaurgarh Fort

Chittaurgarh fort is perched on the 500 ft. high summit in Chittaurgarh city at 24°54′ north latitude and 74°24′ east longitude in southern part of Rajasthan. The city is situated on the bank of Banas river at an elevation of 408 metres above sea level. It is bounded by Kota and Madhya Pradesh in the east, Banswara in the southwest, Udaipur and Rajsamand in the west, Bhilwara and Bundi in the north. Chittaurgarh is approachable by rail, road and air. Nearest airport is Udaipur and Jaipur. It is 594 km from Delhi and 332 km from Jaipur.

The fort of Chittaur was built by Raja Chitrangad Mori of Mori dynasty in 7th century AD. It is 8 km in length and 2 km in breadth covering an area of 690 acres. Its high and strong rampart has slits for musketry. The fort is 3 km from the main city including one km hill track that passes through seven gateways viz. Padan pole, Bhairon pole, Hanuman pole, Ganesh pole, Jodla pole, Laxman pole and Ram pole. Bagh Singh died fighting at Padan pole during the second devastation of Chittaur. His *chhatri* has been erected at this place. Bhairon pole is named after Bhairon Dass of Solanki clan who battled till his end against the army of Sultan Bahadurshah. The *chhatri* of Kalla and Jaimal Rathore are supported on four and six pillars respectively. Hanuman pole is named on account of Hanuman temple. Ganesh pole is flanked by a small temple of Lord Ganesh. Jodla pole is followed by Lakshman pole named after Lakshman temple. Ram pole is the last gateway flanked by *chhatri* of Patta and Tuljabhawani temple. Beeka Khoh Burj is known for gallantry deeds of Hada Rajput Arjun of Bundi who along with his troops died fighting against the army of Sultan Bahadurshah.

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The fort houses palaces, towers, armoury, secret tunnels, water reservoirs, baoris and temples of Kumbh Shyam, Meerabai, Tuljabhawani, Neelkanth Mahadev, Samidwesh-war, Kukreshwar Mahadev, Adbudhnath, Parsavnath Jain and Shringar Chauri. The ceilings, arches, walls and pillars of the temples are ornamented with the sculptures of deities. The fort once had 113 temples, 84 water reservoirs and 24 Haveli, most of them are in ruins now. A sizeable population still lives in the fortified area having facilities of school, hospital, post office, water etc.

Rana Kumbha built the magnificent nine-storey Tower of Victory (Vijay Stambh) in the fort in 1448 AD to commemorate his victory over the combined army of Malwa and Gujarat. The tower dedicated to Lord Vishnu is built of light yellow sandstone which is 120 ft. high and 30 ft. wide consisting of 157 narrow and steep winding steps. The outer surface of the tower is carved in geometric pattern along with sculptured figures of deities, lions and elephants. Each storey has a small balcony carved exquisitely with secular figures around it. The walkway in each storey is enclosed with stone screens. The eighth storey is crowned with the images of Trinity i.e. Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh and finials at the apex. The eaves of first storey have sculptures of elephants around it and the lion each on four corners. Most of the images are partially damaged. The interior is similarly embellished. The inscriptions in the upper storey give detailed chronological account of life and achievements of rulers of Chittaur. It was taken by Rana Kumbha's court scholar Atri and later completed by his son Mahesh. The names of architect of this tower Jaita along with his three sons Napa, Puja and Poma are also carved in the fifth storey.

The 6-storey Tower of Fame (Kirti Stambh) is 75 ft. high, 30 ft. wide at the base and 15 ft. at the top. It was built by a Jain merchant Jeeja, son of Bagherwal Mahajan Naay in 14th century. The tower is adorned with 5 ft. high sculptured image of Adinathji each on four cardinal directions in the lower storey. The images of several Jain divinities and Tirthankars have been carved in stone on the upper storeys.

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Kumbh Shyam temple, dedicated to Varaha Avtar (boar incarnation of Lord Vishnu), was built by Maharana Kumbha in 8th century AD. It is raised on a plinth and consists of *garbhagriha, antarala, mandap, ardhmandap* and an open *pradakshinapath*. An image of *Varaha* is shown in the principal niche on the back of the shrine. The temple is built of yellow sandstone, chiseled and carved meticulously with secular figures. A flight of steps followed by an arched gateway leads to the sanctum through an arcaded corridor having domical ceiling. The pillars are simple and void of usual floral bases. The sanctum is enshrined with the images of Krishan, Radha and Balram. The carved alcoved balconies are adorned with secular figures. The *shikhar* (tower) of the temple is topped by *amalaka* (ribbed disk) and crowned with *kalash* (water pot) at the apex. The *shikhar* is surrounded by several miniature *shikhar*s showing sculptured images of deities in the alcoves. A sculpture of Garud (vulture) in black stone is erected under a canopy in front of the temple. The entire façade of the temple is spectacular. The temple was desecrated by Muslim invaders.

Meerabai temple, originally a Vishnu temple was built by Rana Kumbha, which later became popular as Meerabai temple. The *shikhar* of the temple is covered with miniature *shikhars* ornamented with the sculptures and surrounded by two domes, one larger than the other. The sanctum is enshrined with the image of Lord Krishan along with sculpture of Meera in sitting posture holding *Ektara*. The front stone panel of the sanctum is thickly carved with secular figures. The domical ceiling has a carved lotus in the center. The foot marks of her Guru Ravidas are carved in stone under the canopy near the temple. Meerabai, daughter of Ratan Singh was born in Kurki village of Merta in 1498. Meera was very young when her mother died. She was brought up by her grandfather Rao Dudaji. She was married off to prince Bhojraj, son of Rana Sanga of Mewar in 1516. She was an ardent devotee of Lord Krishan and served the saints. Her husband and other royal family members did not like her being over-religious. Her father, husband and father-in-law died in the battle of Khanwa

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in 1527. Rana Vikramditya, brother of Bhojraj discouraged Meera in her religious pursuits. He even gave her poison but she survived. Meera left Mewar for Merta and then on pilgrimage to Dwarka where she died in 1546. She wrote and sang devotional songs of Lord Krishan which are still sung in India.

Samadhiswar temple is dedicated to Lord Shiv in Trinity form. The temple consists of *garbhagriha* and *antarala* and *gudha-mandap* with *mukhmandap* (entrance porch) on all the three faces on north-western and southern sides. A colossal image of three-faced Shiv is enshrined in the sanctum. The temple was originally built by Raja Bhoj and renovated by Rana Mokal after capturing Chittaurgarh from Malwa, hence it is also known as Mokalji ka Mandir. It is carved exquisitely in yellow sandstone.

Kalika temple popularly called Kali Mata Mandir was built in 8th century A.D. Originally a Sun temple, built by Bappa Rawal was later converted into Kali temple by subsequent rulers. The ceilings, pillars and walls have been carved in floral pattern along with the images of sun on the outer walls. Surya Kund (Sun Tank) is located near the temple. The temple was desecrated by Allauddin Khilji in 1303. A large number of people visit the temple during Navratra festival.

Parsavnath Jain temple was built in 15th century. Shringar Chauri Jain temple has single large dome and a *shikhar* overlapped with miniature *shikhars* whereas the outer walls have sculptured images. Sat Bis Deori, a group of twenty seven Jain shrines was built in 1448. The main shrine consists of *garbhgriha, antarala, mandap, sabhamandap and mukhamandap.*

There are a number of small and big water reservoirs in the fortress. Gau-mukh kund is situated south of Samadhisvar temple adjacent to western rampart. It is a large, deep, rock-cut tank of irregular oblong shape. A perennial underground stream of crystal clear water flows into it from a small natural cave through a "Gau-mukh" (cow's head-shaped outlet). It is 50 ft. deep and has plenty of fish. One can have an overview of Chittaur town from Gau-mukh. Chitrang Talab is an ancient

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water reservoir built by Chitrangad Mori. Kukadeshwar Kund was built by Raja Kukadeshwar in 755 AD along with Kukadeshwar Mahadev temple. A memorial of Rawat Sanidass of Saloomber is located near Suraj pole. He died in the battle against Mughal army. There is a memorial of Raghav Dev, son of Rana Lakha who was assassinated here. Mahasati Sthal is the site where the royal ladies committed sati on the funeral pyres of their husbands. One of the *jauhars* also took place at this place. The grave of Peer Nougja is located nearby.

Rana Kumbha built Kumbha palace in Rajput style of architecture. The palace is presently in depleted condition. The entrance to the palace is through two gateways known as Badi pole and Tripolia gate which further leads to Suraj Gokhra, Zanana Mahal, Kanwarpada-ka-Mahal in the open courtyard. There are underground chambers in the palace. The Zanana Mahal and Dewan-i-Am are in ruins.

The 2-storey palace of Rani Padmini is built in Hindu style of architecture on rectangular plan with two domes on the top. The palace stands at the northern periphery of Padmini pond. It is said that it was from here Allauddin Khilji took a glimpse of legendary beauty Rani Padmini through a mirror and subsequently attacked the fort. A three-storeyed pavilion known as Jal Mahal stands in the middle of the pond. The deep arched recesses are carved on the outer wall of Jal Mahal. It was repaired by Maharana Sajjan Singh during the late 19th century. The palaces of Gora, Badal, Rana Ratan Singh, Jaimal and Patta are in ruins. Havelis of Bhamashah and Alha Kabra are also in ruins. The palace of Khatan Rani, wife of Maharana Kshetra Singh is reduced into rubble.

Ratan Singh Palace adjacent to Ratneshwar pond was built by Rana Ratan Singh-II (1528-31). It is rectangular on plan and comprises a courtyard surrounded by rooms and a pavilion with balcony on the eastern part of the second storey. Maharana Fateh Singh of Udaipur (1884-1930) built Fateh Prakash Mahal. It houses a museum having collections of royal outfits, arms, ancient paintings etc. The Mahal is crowned with tower each on four corners. The palace is a grand specimen of modern Indian architecture.

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History

Legend has it that Raja Shiladitya-VI was ruling over Vallabhi (now Bhavnagar in Gujarat) during 6th century A.D. When Arab invaders attacked Vallabhi and killed Raja Shiladitya, his queen Pushpawati committed sati after giving birth to Goh in Idar (Gujarat) inhabitated by Bhil tribesmen. Goh or Guhil grew up and became the chieftain of Bhils in 568 AD. He was succeeded by Raja Bhoj and Raja Mohender who ruled over Idar and Bhommat. Thereafter, Raja Nagaditya expanded territory upto Udaipur and made capital at Nagda, 22 km from Udaipur after his name. The reign was succeeded by Raja Shiladitya-II, Raja Aprajit, Raja Mohindra-II and Raja Kalbhoj. Raja Kalbhoj, son of Raja Mohinder-II, was popularly called Bappa Rawal. Bappa or Bapu is an honorific title given to an elderly person equivalent to father. Bappa captured the fort of Chittaur from Raja Man Mori in 734 AD and laid the foundation of Gehlot dynasty in Mewar after Raja Goh.

Chittaurgarh was conquered by Pratihars who were ruling over northern Marwar during 6th century with their capital at Mandore. During this time, Raja Chunda of Rathore clan was ruling over Pali. He defeated Pratihars and captured Mandore. He also took control of Chittaurgarh. Parmar Raja Munj of Malwa captured Chittaur and annexed it to his state. Chalukya dynasty was ruling over western and central India during 10th-13th century. Raja Jai Singh of this dynasty conquered Malwa from Yashovarman in 1133 which also led to the possession of Chittaur and ruled till 1150. Chittaurgarh fell into the hands of Gehlot Raja Ratan Singh in 13th century. Gehlot family split into two branches of which one settled at Sisoda and the other at Dungarpur. Rahap, son of Karan Singh-I of Mewar settled at Sisoda village whose descendants came to be known as Sisodia who established Sisodia dynasty. Mahap, brother of Rahap settled at Dungarpur as chieftain.

The Chittaurgarh was devastated three times by Muslim invaders of Malwa, Gujarat and Delhi in which thousands of Rajput women committed *jauhar* while their men performed *kesaria*. Allauddin Khilji fell on the beauty of Rani Padmini of

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Chittaur who was married to Rana Ratan Singh. Allauddin laid siege to the fort in 1290 that lasted for about six months. Both sides suffered heavy casualties during the protracted siege. Rajput warriors put stiff resistance to Muslim army. Allauddin sent proposal to Rana Ratan Singh that he would lift the siege provided Rani Padmini show her a glimpse. Rana Ratan Singh agreed to his proposal to evade bloodshed. Rani Padmini palace was situated amid the pond in front of two-storey building. Rani came out on the balcony; her reflection fell on the water surface which further reflected on the mirror in the building. Allauddin saw the Rani's image in the mirror and wished her for his harem. He attacked Chittaur and detained Rana. Rani Padmini hatched a plan by sending a proposal to Allauddin that she would submit before his wish provided he would send 700 Palkis for her maids who would also accompany her to Delhi. Allauddin acceded to her proposal and sent 700 Palkis to Rani Padmini. Rani placed Rajput soldiers in woman outfits with arms in the Palkis. When the Palkis reached the camp of Khilji, Rani expressed her desire to Allauddin to see Rana Ratan Singh. As soon as Rana came out from the camp, the palkimen attacked the Muslim soldiers by taking Rana to their side. Badal and Gora (uncle of Rani Padmini) fought heroically and slew many Muslim soldiers. Khilji returned to Delhi in disgrace.

Allauddin Khilji attacked Chittaur with a large contingent in 1303 which resulted into a fierce battle and heavy causalities on both sides. Apprehending the defeat, Rana directed his people to perform *jauhar* and *kesaria*. Rani Padmini along with 16000 women performed *jauhar* in the fort. The logs were put in the tunnel and set on fire. Rajput women unfurling their hairs walked straight into the burning tunnel amid the chanting of verses of valour and honour. The mouth of the tunnel was closed turning everything into ashes. Rajput soldiers performed *kesaria* by wearing yellow robes, wielding swords and spheres and slew whosoever came into their way. The dead bodies and limbs were strewn all around. The clacking of swords and taps of horses were dwindling moment by

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moment as more bodies fell on the ground. It was the first Saka of Chittaur.

Allauddin left for Delhi after handing over the fort to his son Khizra Khan. When Delhi was attacked by Tughlaks, Khizra Khan returned to Delhi after appointing Raja Maldev of Jalore as governor of Chittaur. After the death of Allauddin Khilji, Rana Hamir of Sisoda village in Mewar captured Chittaur and established the Sisodia dynasty in Mewar. Maldev sought help from Muhammad Khilji, son of Allauddin Khilji to oust Hamir from Chittaur. Muhammad Khilji sent a detachment to Chittaur to subdue Hamir. But the Muslim army failed to occupy the fort from Rajput soldiers. Rana Hamir ruled over Mewar from 1326 to 1369. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Kshetra Singh who ruled till 1382. He also proved an effective ruler of Mewar. He defeated Sultan Amee Shah of Malwa. He was assassinated by a Hada chief in 1382. His son, Rana Lakha seated on the throne. Rana Lakha constructed water reservoirs, lakes, Banjara dam on Pichola lake and temples. He also repaired the buildings in the fort including Padmini palace which was damaged by Allauddin Khilji. Lakha died in a battle against Muslims at Gaya in 1421. Rana Lakha's grandson Mokal acceded to the throne and defeated Feroze Khan of Nagaur and Sultan of Gujarat. Rana Mokal was assassinated by his uncles in 1433. He also built palaces and temples.

Rana Kumbha ascended the throne of Chittaur in 1433 at young age. An ally of Malwa and Gujarat led by Mehmood Khilji invaded Mewar during his reign. Rana Kumbha defeated Mehmood Khilji and built a Tower of Victory (Vijay Stambh) in the fort. He also built forts of Kumbhalgarh and Achalgarh. Rana Kumbha was fond of poetry and music. He wrote *'Geet Govinda'*, *'Surprabhand'* and *'Sangeet Meemansa'*. Qutubudin of Gujarat attacked Chittaur in 1458 but failed to subdue it. Rana Kumbha was assassinated by his son Udai Singh in 1468. Udai Singh ruled for a short period and died. Rana Raimal, brother of Udai Singh ascended the throne in 1473. During his reign, Sultan Ghiasuddin of Malwa made a futile attempt

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to capture Chittaur in 1475. Rana had three sons-Sanga, Prithviraj and Jaimal.

Rana Sanga or Sangram Singh seated on the throne of Mewar in 1509. He won 18 battles against Muslim rulers. He defeated Sikander Lodhi of Delhi, Mehmood Shah of Gujarat and Nasiruddin Khilji of Malwa. Babar used cannons in the battle of Khanwa in 1527 and defeated Rana Sanga. Rana Sanga sustained nearly 100 wounds on his body and lost limbs. He lost one hand and one foot in a battle against Ibrahim Lodhi. He also lost one eye in childhood at the hands of his brother Prithviraj. Even though he continued fight against his enemies until his end. Rana Sangram Singh had seven sons - Bhojraj, Karan Singh, Ratan Singh, Vikramjit Singh, Udai Singh, Parvat Singh and Krishan Singh. Rana Ratan Singh-II succeeded to the throne as his brothers except Vikramjit Singh and Udai Singh, had already died in the battle in 1527. Raja Surajmal of Bundi killed Rana Ratan Singh during hunting in the forest of Bundi on account of some dispute. However, Rana too hit Raja Surajmal with his sword and both died instantly. Vikramjit Singh came to the throne in 1533 and ruled for four years.

Chittaurgarh was devastated second time in 1534 during the reign of Vikramjit Singh when Sultan Bahadurshah of Gujarat attacked Chittaurgarh. The young Udai Singh was escorted to Bundi for safety. Bagh Singh, chief of Pratapgarh along with his soldiers formed the strong defences in the fort. Bahadurshah fired cannons that made a breach in the wall and the enemy party entered into the fort. Bagh Singh fought valiantly and died at Padan Pole. Maharani Jawaharbai on her horse put many to the sword till her last breath. Rani Karmwati sent 'Rakhi' (ceremonial band) to Mughal emperor Humayun requesting him for help for the defence of Chittaurgarh. Rani Karmwati along with 13000 Rajput women committed *jauhar* in the fort. The pyre of *jauhar* was lit in a deep pit in the fort. Rajput women unfurling their hairs and raising hands jumped into the fire creating a flurry of cracks and cries in the fire pit. The daring Rajput warriors performed

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kesaria and played a bloodbath. The limbs, blood and the dead bodies were strewn all around on the bloodthirsty soil of Mewar. Humayun marched with a large cavalry and defeated Bahadurshah. Vikramjit Singh was reinstated on the throne but later removed by the nobles.

Banveer, son of Prithviraj was enthroned as Rana of Chittaur in 1536. Banveer killed Vikramjit Singh and wanted to kill the future heir Udai Singh too but he was saved by a faithful mid-wife and governess Panna Dhai. Panna sent out Udai Singh secretly to Kumbhalgarh and placed her own son on the cot of Udai Singh in his royal attire. Banveer mistaken him as Udai Singh and slashed him to death. Udai Singh after attaining age dethroned Banveer in 1541.

Chittaurgarh was devastated third time in 1567 when Mughal emperor Akbar invaded it during the reign of Rana Udai Singh. Rana Udai Singh along with his family escaped to nearby hills after handing over the defences to Jaimal Rathore and Patta Sisodia along with eight thousand soldiers. Mughal army constructed a tunnel in the hills to reach close to the fort. They laid mines which made a breach in the rampart while the cannons blew off the bastions. The artillery fire of defenders killed many Muslim soldiers. Akbar constructed a covered passage called *'sabat'* for protection from artillery fire. However, many labourers killed by gun shots during the construction of *'sabat'*. Akbar compensated them generously with gold coins. Jaimal received injury in his foot from the gunshot of Akbar. The siege continued for months which led to shortage of provisions in the fort. Mughal army had reached close to the fort. Rajputs decided to perform *jauhar* and *kesaria*. The injured Jaimal and Patta fought heroically. Kalla lifted injured Jaimal on his shoulders and both fought fiercely until they fell on the ground. Patta was flung in the air by an elephant and thrashed on the ground at Suraj pole. Mughal army also suffered hugely. Mughal army entered into the fort on February 25, 1568. The temples were demolished. Akbar left for Ajmer after appointing Asafkhan as Quiledar. Akbar was impressed upon the heroism of Jaimal and Patta and got

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their sculptures seated on elephants built at Singh pole of Agra fort. Udai Singh left Chittaur and founded the city Udaipur in 1570 which became the second capital of Mewar. Udai Singh married the daughter of Songare chieftain from whom Rana Pratap Singh was born who never submitted before Mughals.

Udai Singh died on February 28, 1572 at the age of 42 at Gogunda. Rana Pratap Singh came to the throne of Mewar at Kumbhalgarh as Chittaur was under the occupation of Mughals. Rana spent his entire life in the forest and fought battles with Mughal army to free Chittaur from their control. The battle of Haldighati was fought between Akbar and Rana Pratap Singh on June 18, 1576. Haldighati, literally means turmeric valley due to its yellow colour. The battle was fought at a place called '*Rakta-Talai*' near village Khamnor. 'Rakta' and 'Talai' means 'blood' and 'pond' respectively. The battlefield had turned into a pond of blood of thousands of Muslim and Rajput soldiers. Mughal army was commanded by Raja Man Singh of Amber on his elephant. Rana Pratap's horse Chetak jumped and put both the front foot on the elephant's head. Rana flung his sphere on Man Singh which pierced his hauda. Meanwhile, a sword tied on the elephant's trunk caused a grievous cut on the foot of Chetak. Rana Pratap was persuaded to leave the field. Jhala took the royal insignia of Mewar on him and fought with Mughal army. Rana on his injured Chetak had been escorted out of the field by Hakim Sur Khan. Chetak was running fast and bleeding profusely until he jumped across the wide drainage and collapsed. A memorial of Chetak has been built at this place. Rana Pratap was being chased secretly by Mughal soldiers. Shakti Singh, brother of Rana Pratap Singh who had joined the Mughal army saved the life of Rana by killing the chasing soldiers.

Mughals had captured most of the territory which made Rana to take refuge deep in the forest. He and his men pledged that they would give up all luxury, would eat on leaves and sleep on the ground. Their moustache would not be twisted up until Chittaur is freed from Mughal's control. Bhama Shah, a minister of Mewar, gave Rana the concealed treasures. Rana

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Pratap reorganized his army and fought couple of battles against Mughals. He could able to take control of a large part of Mewar except Chittaurgarh and Mandalgarh. He died at Chavand on January 19, 1597.

Amar Singh succeeded as next ruler of Mewar. Rana Amar Singh defeated the Mughal army sent by emperor Jahangir under the command of Shahjahan in 1603. Jahangir sent several expeditions to Chittaur under the command of army commander Abdullah, his sons Parvez and Shahjahan and grandson Mahawat Khan at different times but they all remained unsuccessful in subduing the Rana. Rana Amar Singh finally signed a peace treaty with Mughal emperor Jehangir on Feb.5, 1615 on certain conditions that he would not appear in the court of Mughal emperor, rather his son Karan Singh would attend the court. Amar Singh died in 1621 and his son Karan Singh acceded to the throne. After the death of Maharana Karan Singh, his son Jagat Singh seated on the throne. His reign remained peaceful and prosperous. Maharana Jagat Singh built Jag Niwas, Jag Mandir and water reservoirs. He renovated the forts and palaces. He was succeeded by his son Maharana Raj Singh who constructed the Rajsamand lake.

Aurangzeb sent proposal to princess Prabhawati of Marwar for marriage. Rani turned down his proposal, instead proposed Rana Raj Singh of Mewar. Rana Raj Singh overthrew the Mughal troops from Marwar dispatched by Aurangzeb. This led the emperor to send another expedition to Chittaur in 1680. Rana defeated Mughal army many times. Finally, a peace treaty was signed. After the death of Rana Raj Singh in 1681, his son Jai Singh reigned over Mewar and maintained friendly relations with Mughals. He built Jaisamand lake and died in 1700. Thereafter, Rana Sangram Singh-II ruled over Mewar. Aurangzeb died in 1707 that weakened the Mughal Empire which subsequently collapsed with the emergence of British rule. Rana Jagat Singh, son of Sangram Singh acceded to the throne in 1734. During this period, Marathas after conquering Malwa and Gujarat turned their attention towards Rajputana.

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To defend their state, the rulers of Mewar and Jaipur resolved their dispute and fought collectively against Marathas. Maratha leader Baji Rao reached Mewar with a large contingent and captured Udaipur in 1755. He signed treaty and fixed tribute. Hulkar plundered Mewar several times which weakened it economically. In 1817, Rana Bhim Singh signed treaty with British government, which protected Mewar from further aggression. Col. Tod. was appointed the first British political agent in Mewar.

Tourist attractions around Chittaurgarh

Nagri, 20 km from Chittaurgarh, is situated on the bank of river Bairach. The place is known for the Hindu and Buddhist remains of Maurya and Gupta period. **Bijayipur** is 40 km and known for a marvellous castle built by Shakti Singh, the younger brother of Maharana Pratap. It has been converted into a heritage hotel. **Sita Mata Sanctuary** is situated at Dhariyavad in the Aravalli range and the Malwa plateau fed by three rivers. According to legend, Sita, wife of Lord Ram stayed here in Rishi Valmiki's Ashram during her exile period. **Matri Kundia temple** is 50 km from the city. The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiv and is popularly called 'Haridwar of Mewar'. **Sanwariyaji temple** is 40 km on Chittaur-Udaipur road. It is an important pilgrimage spot dedicated to Lord Krishan. **Bassi Wildlife Sanctuary** has population of panthers, wild boars, antelopes, mongoose and migratory birds. **Menal,** 90 km from the city, is famous for ancients Shiv temples, waterfalls and dense forests. The best season to visit Chittaurgarh is from September to March.

Kumbhalgarh Fort, Rajsamand

Kumbhalgarh fort is situated in Kelwada tehsil of Kumbhalgarh town at 25°08' north latitude and 73°37' east longitude in Rajsamand district of Rajasthan. The fort is perched on the steep hill at an altitude of 3,568 ft. above sea level. It is 50 km from the district headquarters Rajsamand and 105 km northwest of Udaipur. Kumbhalgarh is bounded by Ajmer in the north, Bhilwara in the northeast, Chittaurgarh

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in the southeast, Udaipur in the south and Pali in the northwest. Rana Raj Singh of Mewar had founded the town Rajsamand and its lake. The district has total area of 4,768 sq. km. Banas and Chandrabhaga rivers flow through the district. The white marble extracted from Rajnagar mines is famous in the state by the same name. Kumbhalgarh is approachable by road. Udaipur is the nearest airport.

The fort is spread over a large area in the mountainous terrain surrounded by deep ravines and dense forest. Rana Kumbha had built this invincible fort during 1438-1458 under the supervision of famous architect Mandan. It is also believed that Raja Samprati of Maurya dynasty had built this fort during 3rd century BC. Later, his successors who had embraced Jainism built several Jain temples in the fort complex, ruins of which still exist in the fort. A metalled road passing through Kelwada village leads to the fort crossing four huge gateways on the way. First is the Aret pole in the south, constructed between two hills and flanked by guard rooms on its either side. Second is the Halla pole built strategically on a high hill affording a large view round the fort. Third is Hanuman pole adorned with an idol of Lord Hanuman brought by Rana Kumbha from Mandavpur. Ram pole is the last gate wherefrom the boundary of the fort starts. The palatial complex at the top is approached further through three gateways viz. the Bhairon pole, Nimboo pole and Paghra pole. One more gateway is situated on the east known as Danibatta which connects Mewar with Marwar. The fort is encircled by a massive red sandstone rampart consisting of several bastions. The fort houses Badal Mahal, Kumbha palace, Hindu and Jain temples, water reservoirs, step wells and cenotaphs. Lakhola tank was built by Rana Lakha during 1382-1421. Badshahi Baori is a large step well in rectangular shape which is believed to have been constructed by Shahbaz Khan for meeting the water requirements of his army. A *chhatri* of Kunwar Prithviraj consists of 12 pillars. It comprises sculpture of Prithviraj on the horseback flanked by the images of Tarabai and Panabai who committed sati on his funeral pyre.

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Two-storey palace of Rana Kumbha consists of two rooms, a corridor in the middle and an open space in the front. The rooms are provided with *jharokha* and windows in stones. The palace is in depleted condition. The mansion known as Jhalia ka Malia or the Palace of Queen Jhali near Pagda pole is believed to be the place where Maharana Pratap was born. It is made of rubble with simple walls and flat roof bearing faded murals. Badal Mahal is situated at the highest point of the fort. Built by Rana Fateh Singh (1885-1930), the palace is a two-storey structure divided into two interconnected distinct portions i.e. the Zanana Mahal and the Mardana Mahal. This palace is profusely decorated with wall paintings. The stone screens in Zanana Mahal facilitated the queens to view the court proceedings and other events.

Neelkanth Mahadev temple situated east of vedi temple is erected on 24 stone pillars. It was built in 1458. It is topped by a large dome surrounded by four small domes. The temple is enshrined with Shiv Ling *in garbhagriha.* It is built on a raised platform accessible from west through a flight of steps. The temple consists of a sanctum and an open pillared *mandap* all around. The shrine in *sarvatobhadra* has entrances from all the four directions. The stone inscription on the left pillar of the western gate informs about its renovations by Rana Sanga. A sculptured image of deity with twelve hands is also enshrined in the sanctum. Rana Kumbha built Ganesh temple in white marble. It is crowned with two *shikhars* and four domes. According to an inscription of Kirti Stambh, Rana Kumbha consecrated the image of Lord Ganesh in this temple. Mataji temple attributed to Kela Devi is in ruins. The Sun temple is adorned with figures of Hindu deities on the walls. It is also in ruins. Rana Kumbha built the Yagna Vedi, a magnificent two-storey building in 1457 to perform certain rituals on the completion of the fort. It is octagonal on plan with thirty six marble pillars supporting the domical ceiling. A flight of steps to Vedi opens onto an extensive court flanked by three temples. Navdurga temple also bears some stone inscriptions. Mamadev temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu was built by Rana Kumbha

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along with a water reservoir of the same name. The temple is presently in ruins.

Bawan Jain temple is built on an 8 ft. high stone platform. It consists of 52 Jain temples. The temple derives its name from fifty two (bawan) shrines in a single compound, built around the main shrine. The bigger shrine consists of a sanctum, *antarala* and an open *mandap*. An image of Jain tirthankar is carved on the *lalatabimba* of the doorway. The smaller shrines are devoid of any idols. The temple has spacious courtyard adorned with the images of Lord Mahavir. The magnificent edifice has 52 domes around a lofty dome. The outer wall is carved with secular figures. The temple is in depleted condition.

Golera Jain temple is next to Bawan Devri. It consists of nine shrines enclosed by a circular wall on a high rock platform. The idols of various deities including Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh have been carved on the outer wall of the temple. One of the sculptures bears an inscription dating back to 1459 AD. Pitalia Dev temple is situated in the northern part of the fort. Built by Pitalia Jain Seth in 1455 AD on a raised plinth, the temple consists of a pillared *sabhamandap* and a sanctum accessible from four cardinal directions. The *jangha* is adorned with secular figures, besides *apsaras* and dancers. It has spacious hall resting on chiseled stone pillars. The outer wall is embellished with the figures of Brahama, Shiv, Yama, Agni, Varun, etc. Parsavanath temple is erected on a high hill. It is enshrined with 3 ft. high idol of Parsavnath flanked by two idols in red sandstones on either side. The sculptured image of Parsavnath in white marble seated on a lotus flower with palms in the lap is graceful. A stone inscription informs that the temple was built by one Nar Singh Pokhad in 1451. It is also in depleted condition.

Mamadeo temple also known as Kumbha-Shyam consists of a flat roof sanctum and a pillared *mandap*. An inscription in the temple records the detailed history of Kumbhalgarh. A large number of carved idols of gods and goddesses were recovered from this temple. Rana Kumbha was believed to be assassinated by his son Udai on the bank of Mamadeo pond located near the temple in 1468.

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History

The coronation ceremony of Maharana Pratap was held at Kumbhalgarh as Chittaurgarh was under the possession of Mughals. Sultans of Malwa and Gujarat attacked Kumbhalgarh in 1457 but they failed to capture it. Sultan Qutubuddin of Gujarat moved his forces over Kumbhalgarh. Rana Kumbha came out of the fort and put many to the sword. Qutubuddin returned to Gujarat empty hands. Sultan Mehmood Khilji of Malwa besieged the fort and cut off the water supply. Khilji after extracting heavy amounts lifted the siege. Akbar sent an expedition to Kumbhalgarh under the command of general Shahbaz Khan to subdue Maharana Pratap. The Mughal army laid siege to the fort from all sides and weakened the defences. Maharana Pratap fled to forest leaving the charge of the defences to his cousin Bhan Songara. Mughals occupied the fort after a stiff fight with Rajputs. Shahbaz Khan and his men followed Maharana Pratap Singh in the forest but in vain. Later, Maharana Pratap Singh reorganized his forces and snatched Kumbhalgarh from Mughals in 1582.

Tourist attractions around Rajsamand

Nathdwara temple dedicated to Lord Krishan is 15 km from Rajsamand. **Dwarkadish** temple is 16 km from Nathdwara at Rajsamand Lake in Kankroli village. The temple is dedicated to Lord Krishan. **Kumbhalgarh wild life sanctuary** is spread over an area of 580 sq. km in the districts of Rajsamand, Udaipur and Pali. Haldighati 40 km from Rajsamand and 60 km from Udaipur is the place where a battle between Akbar and Maharana Pratap was fought in 1576.

City Palace, Udaipur

The City Palace is situated at the heart of Udaipur city at 24°36' north latitude and 73°47' east longitude in the southern part of Rajasthan. Rana Udai Singh founded Udaipur city in 1570 as the second capital of Mewar. According to legend, Rana Udai Singh during hunting in the forest came across a

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seer who blessed the Rana and advised him to build a palace at this place for his good fortune. Rana Udai Singh built a small mansion which was expanded by 22 successive rulers and the edifice came to be known as City Palace. Udaipur, the city of lakes and an administrative headquarters of the district, is located at an altitude of 577 metres above sea level. It is bounded by Rajsamand in the north, Chittaurgarh in the east, Pali in the northwest, Sirohi in the west, Dungarpur in the south and Gujarat state in southwest. Banas river flows through the district. Udaipur is approachable by rail, road and air. It is 420 km from Jaipur.

The City Palace is accessible through Tripolia gate, a triple-arched gateway built in 1725. Maharana was use to be weighed in gold and silver coins under the Tripolia and the coins were given away in the public. Hathi pole (elephant gate) leads to an extensive courtyard of lush greens lawns and fountains in geometric designs. The fabulous 5-storey palace crowned with domes at the apex comes to view from the courtyard. It is built of white marble and sandstone. A 105 ft. high palace affords a panoramic view of the Udaipur city below. Jag Mandir and Jag Niwas on the Pichola Lake look marvellous at distance. Rana Bhim Singh (1778-1828) built Suraj Gokhada (a sun window) in the palace for giving public audience. The image of sun, as representation of solar race, is also depicted on the Gokhada. Mor Chowk (Peacock courtyard) is embellished with blue glass mosaic. A few shops at Mor Chowk selling antique items, Rajputani dresses, books, magazines etc. are the later construction. Earlier the elephants were kept at Mor Chowk, now a parking lot for vehicles.

The palace complex houses small palaces, built and renovated by successive rulers of Mewar. Manak Mahal (Ruby Palace) has cut-glass work in floral designs with sparkling colours. The doors are decorated with inlaid ivory. It has a big dining room. Krishan Vilas is adorned with miniature paintings drawing scenes from royal court, natures and folks legends.

Moti Mahal (Pearl Palace) is embellished with mirror work on the walls in colourful outlines. The ceiling is

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meticulously painted in floral motif. The doors are decorated with inlaid ivory. The dressing room of the queen is similarly decorated. Chini Mahal is embellished with patterned tiles. Zanana Mahal (Palace of Women) is adorned with beautiful murals. It was built by Maharana Karan Singh in 1620 and was expanded by subsequent rulers. It consists of one small prayer room, an exercise room and a private room of Rani Gulab Kanwar. The royal ladies used to stay behind the screened windows to watch the activities at Mor Chowk. Bhim Vilas is adorned with the murals of Lord Krishan. Krishan Vilas displays some royal antiques, furniture, utensils and paintings. Badi Mahal has a cloistered courtyard of 104 marble pillars with a fountain in the centre. The arched alcoves in the corridor were used for keeping oil lamps. Rana Shambhunath Singh had built Shambu Prakash Mahal. Sajjan Niwas built by Rana Sajjan Singh has a large water reservoir and fountains. The interior is adorned with the paintings of hunting. Dil Khushal Mahal embellished with floral motifs was built by Maharana Karan Singh during 17th century. Shambhu Niwas and Shiv Niwas are the royal residence of present Maharana and his family.

The city palace houses Maharana Pratap Museum which has collections of sculptures, inscriptions, paintings, turban of Prince Khurram (Shahjahan), armoury etc. A spear of Maharana Pratap that hit Raja Man Singh of Amber, armour suits of Maharana Pratap and his favourite horse Chetak are also displayed in the museum.

Dhuni Mata Mandir is enshrined with images of deities Charbhuja, Eklingji, Shri Nath and goddess Amba. A place of holy sage is sparingly made in the temple. Madan Bhawan houses Col. James Todds library. One of the rooms has an elaborate mural showing scenes from the life of rulers of Udaipur. The coronation ceremony or 'Lakhu Gokhra' of Maharana used to take place over a white marble plinth. An iron cage near the stable in the courtyard was used for keeping lions.

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Jag Niwas

Jag Niwas or Lake Palace is situated on a rocky surface in the middle of Lake Pichola. It was built by Maharana Jagat Singh-II in three years time in 1746. It is a masonry work of granite and white marble. The rooms are embellished with inlaid glass along with pink and green marble in a designed pattern. The cusped arches add elegance to the interior. Jag Niwas was converted into a five star Lake Palace Hotel in 1963 owned by Taj groups of Hotels. Later, more rooms were added and decorated in the same Rajputani fashion.

Jag Mandir

Jag Mandir or the Island Palace is situated at Pichola Lake. It was built by Maharana Karan Singh in 1620 and completed by Maharana Jagat Singh-II after the death of Karan Singh. The stone sculptures of elephants are erected along the pond. The domed roof of Jag Mandir gave it the name Gol Mahal. The interior is embellished with inlaid onyx, cornelian and agate stones. The Mughal prince Khurram took refuge in this palace in 1623 and exchanged his turban with the Maharana as a symbol of friendship. During 1857 revolt, Maharana Swarup Singh granted shelter to British women and their children in this palace.

Tourist attractions around Udaipur

Fateh Sagar built by Jai Singh is about 3 km from City Palace near village Devali. He also built Samundra pond, Jothar pond and a palace at Jai Samundra lake. **Eklingji** is 22 km from Udaipur. The temple dedicated to Lord Shiv was built in 734 AD. A four-faced image of Lord Shiv in black marble is enshrined in the temple. **Nagda**, 23 km is the ancient site dated back to 6th century AD renowned for the Shastrabahu temple embellished with carvings. **Haldighati** is 40 km from Udaipur. **Nathdwara** is 48 km. **Rajsamand** lake is 66 km. **Kumbhalgarh**, 84 km is famous for its invincible fort built in 15th century by Maharana Kumbha. **Ranakpur**, 90 km is known for beautiful sculptured Jain temples. The main Chaumukha temple is

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dedicated to Tirthankara Adinath which has 29 halls supported by 1444 carved pillars. **Jaisamand lake** is 68 km from Udaipur. It was built in 17th century AD by Maharana Jai Singh which is the second largest lake in Asia. **Shiv Niwas Palace** is located on the bank of Lake Pichola at Udaipur. It was former residence of Maharana of Udaipur. It was built by Maharana Sajjan Shambhu Singh during his reign (1874-1884) and was completed by Maharana Fateh Singh. The best season to visit Udaipur is from September to March.

Small Forts of Mewar

Sajjangarh Palace, Udaipur

Maharana Sajjan Singh (1874–1884) built the Sajjangarh Palace on an 1100 ft. high Bansdara hill in Udaipur city. He originally planned nine-storey palace but due to his early demise at the age of 26 he could build only one storey in 1884. He reigned for ten years. The construction was later completed by his successor Maharana Fateh Singh. Being located at an elevation of 3100 ft. above sea level, the palace, also known as Monsoon Palace, is visible from anywhere in the city. A 3 km steep winding track through the picturesque surrounding affords a panoramic view of Udaipur city and the large expanse of Aravalli ridges. It is 12 kms from City Palace.

The palace is masonry work of white marble and lime mortar in Rajput architecture. The palace is supported on white marble pillars adorned with floral motifs. The overhanging arched balconies, high turrets, domes, lush green lawns and fountains ornament the edifice. The staircase from the courtyard leads to upper storeys with several rooms and small chambers, which are void of any embellishment. The lime mortared walls are adorned with portraits of Mewar rulers. It houses a large underground water tank with storage capacity of about 2 lacs litres of water. The palace is enclosed by Sajjangah wildlife sanctuary built in 1987 which spread over an area of 5.19 sq. km. The palace also served as hunting lodge

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due to its close proximity with the sanctuary which is home for tigers, panthers, wild boars, jackals, neelgai, sambhar, hyenas and reptiles.

Fateh Prakash Palace, Udaipur

Fateh Prakash Palace is situated on the eastern shore of Lake Pichola at Udaipur. It was built by Maharana Fateh Singh during his reign from 1885 to 1935. The foundation stone of its Durbar Hall was laid by Lord Minto, the Viceroy of India in 1909 and it was originally called Minto Hall. The interior is embellished with original miniature paintings, furniture, portraits, royal artifacts and the armoury of the Mewar dynasty. Fateh Prakash Palace has been awarded the National Tourism Award for the best heritage hotel in Heritage Grand category in different times by the Department of Tourism, Government of India.

Shiv Niwas Palace, Udaipur

Shiv Niwas Palace was built during the reign of Maharana Fateh Singh in the early 20th century. It is now a Grand Heritage Palace hotel equipped with modern amenities. The suites and rooms have been decorated in different themes with original furniture and portraits. It affords the panoramic view of Udaipur city from its top. The hotel has 19 rooms, 8 terrace suites, 6 royal suites and 3 imperial suites. Shiv Niwas Palace has been awarded Prestigious Heritage Grand Award by the Department of Tourism, Govt. of India.

Deogarh Mahal, Udaipur

The 17th century Deogarh Mahal is perched on top of a hill at an altitude of 2100 ft above sea level. It was built by Rawal Dwarka Das in 1670. Deogarh was a jagir ruled by the Rawals who were dutiful to Maharana of Udaipur. The turrets, jharokhas and majestic gateways are the architectural features of the palace. Deogarh Mahal was converted into a charming heritage hotel by the present owner, Rawal Nahar Singh. A part of the palace is still occupied by the family.

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It has total of 50 rooms (3 royal suites, 2 studio suites, 23 deluxe suites and 22 deluxe rooms). Though the original ambience of royal time has been retained in the rooms, yet they are well-equipped with all modern comforts.

Fateh Bagh, Ranakpur

Fateh Bagh was built from the remains of Rawla Koshilav Palace situated on the foothills of Aravallis near Jodhpur. It was built in 1802 and remained abandoned for a long period in depleted condition. The remains of this palace around 65,000 pieces were transported to Ranakpur on the bank of rain fed river and Fateh Bagh was created in 2002. It still reflects the Rajput architecture with its majestic arches, intricately carved pillars and pavilions, beautiful domes and the wonderful fountain in the foreground. It is 90 kms from Udaipur.

Mandalgarh Fort, Bhilwara

Mandalgarh fort is perched on the hill at an altitude of 1850 ft. above sea level in Mandalgarh town of Bhilwara Distt. It is 55 km from district headquarters of Bhilwara on Bhilwara-Kota highway. According to Janshruti, Mandalgarh derived its name from Mandia Bhil tribe of the region, while Bhilwara derived its name from Bhil natives. Mandalgarh fort is located at 25°16' north latitude and 75°19' east longitude in the southern part of Rajasthan. Bhilwara is bounded by Ajmer in the north, Udaipur in the north-southwest and Chittaurgarh in the south-southeast, Bundi and Tonk in the northeast. Three rivers Banas, Bedach and Menal flow through the district. Bhilwara is 220 km from Jaipur.

It is believed that Chauhan rulers of Ajmer had built this fort while other opined that chieftain of Balnote branch of Solanki clan had built this fort in 12th century. The fort is spread over an area of one square kilometer and has 7 gateways. Its strong wall has massive bastions. The fort houses Rishabdev Jain temple, Shiv temples, memorials, water reservoirs, wells, store houses and guard rooms. Sagar and Sagri are two water reservoirs in the fort. Shiv temples were built by Raja Vakpatiraj of Chauhan clan. The palaces of Ram

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Singh Rathore, Raja Roop Singh and Quiledar Mehtaji are left with some faded interiors. The fort is presently in depleted condition.

Mohd. Ghauri captured Ajmer along with Mandalgarh from Prithviraj Chauhan. Hadas snatched it from Muslims. Rana Kshetra Singh of Mewar defeated Hadas and occupied Mandalgarh. Sultan Mehmood Khilji of Malwa invaded Mandalgarh in 1442 but overthrew by Rana Kumbha. Mehmood Khilji again launched an attack on Mandalgarh in 1446, this time also he was defeated on the bank of river Banas. Then, Muhammad Shah of Malwa besieged the fort in 1457 and stopped the supply of provisions into the fort but Rana Kumbha uprooted the Muslim army from Mandalgarh. Mughal emperor Akbar captured Mandalgarh in 1567 and made it base camp for his Chittaur campaign. He sent army under the command of Jagannath Kachhawa of Amber to Chittaurgarh. In a retaliatory attack, Mewar forces raided the camp at Mandalgarh and killed Jagannath Kachhawa. Akbar built 68 ft. high fabulous *chhatri* supporting on 32 pillars in the memory of Jagannath. Raja Man Singh of Amber camped at Mandalgarh to organize his army for the battle of Haldighati in 1576. Emperor Shahjahan awarded it as jagir to Rana Roop Singh of Mewar in 1650. It was taken back by Aurangzeb. Later, Rana Amar Singh occupied it from Mughals. Mughal emperor Bahadurshah gave it to Ranbaj Khan Mewati in 1710 but recaptured by Rana of Mewar in 1711. Mandalgarh was plundered several times by Marathas. A treaty with British government by Mewar in 1818 weakened the Marathas' aggression.

Fort of Jahajpur, Bhilwara

Jahajpur fort is situated in Jahajpur town of Bhilwara district. The fort dating back to Mauryan period was reconstructed by Rana Kumbha. It is built of red sandstone. Its double rampart has several bastions. The fort houses temple of Sarveshwarnath, mosque of Gaibi Pir and water reservoirs. Akbar captured it and handed over to Jagmal, the younger son of Rana Udai Singh in 1572. The rulers of Shahpura

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occupied it during 18th century. Jhala Jalim Singh of Kota captured it in 1806. It was recaptured by Mewar in 1819. A major part of it is in ruins. The site is 267 km from Jaipur.

Fort of Banera, Bhilwara

Banera fort is situated in village Banera at a distance of 25 km from Bhilwara city. The fort was built by Raja Sardar Singh in 1735. The fort is accessed through Sihalgarh darwaja and Bhala darwaja. The fort houses palaces, well, baori and temples. Mardana Mahal, Zanana Mahal, Kanwarpada Mahal, Sheesh Mahal, Mitra Niwas and Sardar Niwas are decorated with murals. Rani Naruki of Sardar Singh built Narayan temple and a baori. Aurangzeb awarded it as jagir to Bhim Singh, son of Rana Raj Singh-I of Mewar in 1681. Raja Ummed Singh of Shahpura occupied it after overthrowing the heirs of Bhim Singh in 18th century. However, Rana Raj Singh-II of Mewar reoccupied it and handed over to feudalists of Banera. Then Akbar captured it. It is 292 km from Jaipur.

Juna Mahal, Dungarpur

The towering 7-storey Juna Mahal is situated at the district headquarters Dungarpur in the southern part of Rajasthan. It is bounded by Udaipur in the north, Gujarat in the southwest and Banswara in the east. Mahi is the main river of the district which originates in Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh and enters into Banswara after traversing a long distance and forms the boundary line between Dungarpur and Banswara before entering into Gujarat and falling into the bay of Khambhat. The district which has 3,780 sq. km. area crowned with small hills has small lakes too. Being located in the southern Rajasthan, the district has rich flora and fauna. Dungarpur is also known for its gold and silversmith work besides, lacquer work on toys and picture frames.

The 18th century Juna palace has crenellated walls, turrets, narrow entrance and corridors to restrict the free movement of enemy. The low and flat ceiling is supported on beams and columns. The palace contains small chambers embellished with beautiful frescoes, miniature paintings, glass

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and mirror work. The murals depict the scenes of nature, royalty and folk legends. Sheesh Mahal adorned with mirror work is on the upper storey. The durbar hall is decorated with wall paintings in floral and geometric patterns apart from scenes of royal court and folks. Dewan-i-Am and Dewan-i-Khas are similarly decorated. One of the inner chambers is decorated with inlay of glass. Dungarpur is connected by rail, road and air ways. Dungarpur is 553 km from Jaipur. Nearest airport is Udaipur at a distance of 125 km.

Udai Vilas Mahal at Gaib Sagar was built by Maharawal Udai Singh-II in 1887. It embodies Rajput architecture ornamented with intricately sculptured pillars and panels, impressive balconies, bracketed window and marvelous arches. It is now a heritage hotel.

Dungarpur was founded by Samant Singh, son of Raja Kchem Singh of Mewar in 1179 AD. He was succeeded by several rulers who reigned over the state till it became a part of Rajasthan of independent India. Udai Singh-I (1498-1527) joined Rana Sanga in the battle of Khanwa against Babar where he died. He divided the state of Dungarpur between his two sons Prithviraj and Jagmal. Jagmal made Banswara his capital while Prithviraj made Dungarpur. The old name of Dungarpur is *'Bagad'* which means *'Jungle'*.

Tourist interest around Dungarpur

Govt. Archaeological Museum has collection of ancient statues. A famous shrine of **Shrinathji** is situated along the Gaib Sagar Lake. **Baneshwar temple** dedicated to Lord Shiv is situated on the confluence of Som, Jakham and Mahi rivers. It is 60 km from the city. **Deo Somnath** is famous for 12th century temple of Lord Shiv, built in white marble. It is 24 km from the city. **Galiyakot** is renowned for its magnificent shrine of Sayyad Faqruddin which is visited by a large number of people during the Urs. It is 58 km from the district town. **Bhuvneshwar** is 9 km and is famous for the temple of Lord Shiv. A fair is held here on the fifth day after Holi. Gair dance of Bhils is attraction of the fair.

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Dundhar Region

Jaigarh Fort, Jaipur

Jaigarh fort is situated on a high summit of Aravalli in the capital city Jaipur of Rajasthan at an altitude of 602 m. above sea level. It is 15 km from Jaipur railway station and 5 km from Amber Palace by road. Jaigarh is also approachable from within the Amber Palace by ascending 1 ½ km steep track. Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh-II founded the Jaipur city in 1727 AD which became the second capital of Dundhar State of Kachhawa rulers after Amber. Vidyadhar Bhattacharya was the chief architect of the city which is laid out in grid system with straight avenues, roads, streets and lanes crisscrossing the city with rows of shops on either side of main bazaar. The city is arranged in nine rectangular city sectors (Chowkri). Maharaja Ram Singh-II painted the city pink for an area of 9.8 sq. km to welcome the visit of Prince of Wales to Jaipur in 1876. The city is encircled by 20 ft. high and 9 ft. wide wall consisting of seven huge arched gateways viz. Suraj pole, Chand pole, Ram pole, Shiv pole, Kishan pole, Ganga pole and Dhruv pole flanked by two smaller gateways on their either side. Man pole or New Gate was constructed later. Jaipur is situated at 26° 23' north latitude and 74° 55' east longitude in the eastern part of Rajasthan at an altitude of 431 metres above sea level. It is bounded by Alwar and Dausa in the east, Tonk in the south, Ajmer and Nagaur in the west, Sawai Madhopur in the southeast, Sikar in the northwest and Narnaul district of Haryana in the north. Jaipur district has total area of 11,588 sq. km. and is well connected with rail and road network. Jaipur, Udaipur and Jodhpur lie on the Airlines route that links Delhi and Mumbai. Jaipur is 259 km from Delhi.

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Kachhawa ruler Kakil Dev erected a fort on the hill called *'Chilh ka Tola'* in 11th century AD and the stronghold was known as Amber fort. Sawai Jai Singh-II expanded it with more mansions and named it Jaigarh after his name. The fort is accessed through Dungar pole, Awani pole and Khirki pole. Awani pole is approachable from Amber palace on foot. Khiri pole is the oldest gate and is accessible through Sagri gate near Maotha lake. This gate further leads to Bhairu pole and then to Jaleb chowk. This gate is throng opens to public twice a year i.e. on the eve of 'Bhairav Ashtmi', the birthday of Lord Bhairav and on the 'Annakoot' i.e. the day following Deepawali. Dungar pole is approached through a well-metalled 5 km motorable road amid the lush green Aravalli mountains. A narrow road branches off before Jaigarh and leads towards Nahargarh fort for 10 km through dense forest. Dungar pole opens onto an extensive courtyard surrounded by high walls. It was constructed by Maharaja Man Singh-II in 1942. This gate is followed by two more gates which leads to a courtyard with three water reservoirs (Tanka). Another gate to the north of courtyard leads to Jaleb Chowk of the fort. The courtyard is flanked by two museum galleries on its either side. The temples of Ram Harihar and Lord Bhairav are situated to the north-west of the Jaleb Chowk. Presently, the chowk is used for guard of honour and as salute base to His Highness Brig. Bhawani Singh on the day of Dussahera. The fort is solid masonry of red sandstone. It stretches 3 km in length from north to south and 1 km in breadth from east to west. The rampart snakes over the large area of hilly region and is dotted with slant gun points for musketry. There were 27 chowkies or check posts to guard the periphery wall from any trespass. Two 8-pillared domed kiosks have been erected at strategic locations affording a broad view of Amber Palace and Jaipur city below. The fort houses the following palaces and buildings.

Kathputlighar (Puppet Theatre) was constructed in 17th century. It is a double-storey building with balcony looking below the small courtyard measuring 26 ft.x17 ft. The balcony

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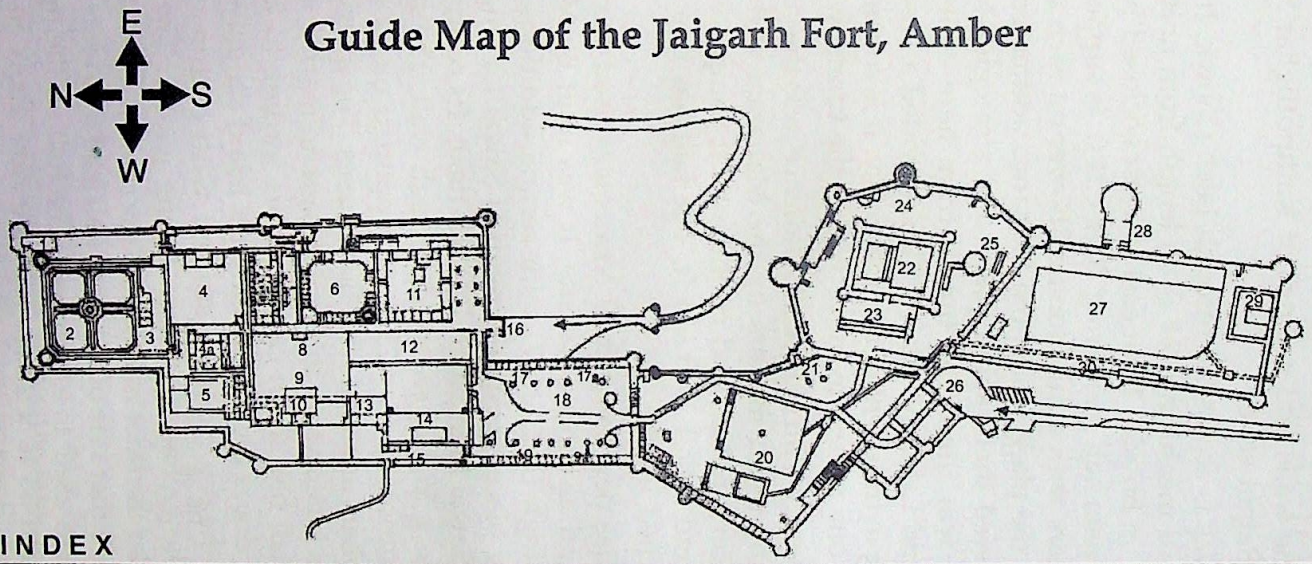
Guide Map of the Jaigarh Fort, Amber



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5	Lalit Mandir	12	Treasury	18	Jaleb Chowk	23	Armoury	30	Flow of Rain Water
6	Surya Mandir	13	Khilbati Niwas			24	Diya Burj		

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Vidhyadhar was awarded a "Siropao' (robe of honour) for the addition done in the palace complex. Maharaja Ram Singh-II added the tin shed in front of the hall.

Lalit Mandir, a 17th century double storeyed building, embodies traditional Rajput style of architecture. The royal members used to live in this mansion during summer. It is flanked by a large courtyard measuring 69 ft. from north to south and 68 ft. from east to west surrounded by high walls. The central hall has 8 twin pillars of sandstone adorned with floral bases in traditional Rajput style. The smooth plaster walls, latticed windows and double-roof add elegance to the interior. The upper storey has bedrooms, pillared verandas with attached balconies. The bed rooms have stone screens (*jharokha*) with *jali* work for cool breeze to come in. The terrace of the Mandir affords a picturesque view of Amber town.

The 16th century Aram Mandir was the rest house for royal family members. It has lush green garden in front of it laid in Charbagh style having four square lawns with a fountain in the centre, operated by a large overhead tank. The sloping pathways on all corners of the garden lead to the upper storey. The two large canopies at the two ends with gleaning spires on each are eye-catching. The main hall (33 ft.x31 ft.) is supported by 12 carved pillars joined with cusped arches. The walls and floors are embellished with inlaid floral design. The hall is flanked by two chambers each on either side. The two large canopies of Aram Mandir are eye catching. This complex is connected to Vilas Mandir through 263 ft. long tunnel.

Vilas Mandir was meant for royal ladies. It was constructed in 17th century. It comprises a spacious hall resting on carved stone pillars. The walls are finished with lime plaster. The courtyard in front of it was used by royal ladies for organizing Janani-Majlis or ladies get together.

Surya Mandir, an 11th century building now houses the tools of gun foundry and those used by blacksmiths and carpenters. This building has seven verandas with several rooms. Lord Shiv worshipped as Jharkhandeshwar Mahadev is enshrined in the form of Ek Ling in the Shiv temple. The

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was meant for royal male and female audience to view the puppet show. The walls and ceilings of Kathputlighar have been painted in Rajput style.

Subhat Niwas is accessible through Jaleb Chowk. It has spacious courtyard measuring 168 ft. in length from north to south and 151 ft. in breadth from east to west enclosed by 11 ft. high wall. Its main hall measuring 70 ft.x 34 ft. is supported on 18 carved pillars with a full bloomed flower on each arch. Subhat Niwas is the place where the Maharaja addressed his soldiers and briefed them about plans and strategies to be adopted during war time. The tunnel from here connects Khilbati Niwas and Lakshmi Vilas. It also provided an escape route for the king in the event of an emergency. It is so narrow that allows only one person to move within the tunnel walls.

Khilbati Niwas, a Hall of Private Audience, was the venue for discussing important matters by the Maharaja with his senior army officers, nobles and confidants. It comprises an extensive court and a hall 33 ft.x14 ft. The hall has two side rooms with attached toilets.

Lakshmi Vilas next to Khilbati Niwas was used as royal drawing room and as ceremonial site. It was built by Mirza Raja Sawai Jai Singh (1621-1667) with certain additions and alterations taking place during the reign of Sawai Jai Singh-II (1700-1743) and Sawai Ram Singh II (1835-1880). Its courtyard is approx. 55.4 m x 36.9 m enclosed by high wall. The main palace hall measuring 68 ft. x 25 ft. is supported on 12 twin carved marble pillars adorned with floral bases. The interior is embellished with inlaid work in floral design on marble walls and floor. The hall has seven carved doors leading to inner apartments. The doors are decorated with inlaid sandalwood and ivory. The heavy curtains stuffed with cotton were dropped over the arched openings during winter. The hot water canals under the floor maintained the room temperature. The two doors on either side of the main hall lead to an elevated balcony which was used as a bedroom. The hall on the upper storey is measured 35 ft. x 26 ft. The two side doors in this room lead to the retiring rooms in the interior. Architect

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people throng to this temple to offer prayers and offerings to Lord Shiv during the month of Shravan. The temple of Goddess Durga is adjacent to the temple of Ram Harihar. The temple was constructed during the reign of present Maharaja Sawai Bhawani Singh, MVC. A marble statue of goddess Durga is enshrined here. On the occasion of Navaratra, the Maharaja offers prayers to the deity. Bhairav temple is a small temple dedicated to the fierce form of Shiv. Bhairav is a gana (associate) of Shiv and is worshipped as a guardian deity of the village, town or a fort. This temple is enshrined with the image of Bhairav having eight hands holding weapons. The other temples at the fort include temple of Balaji (Hanuman), Sitalamata and Lord Ganesh.

Gun-foundry in Jaigarh fort was established by Maharaja Bhagwant Das in 1584. Jaivan cannon is the main attraction of the foundry which was made in this foundry in 1720. The length of its barrel is 20 ft. 2 inches long and diameter of the bore is 11 inches with 8 ½ inches thickness on the face of barrel. The barrel is placed on four-wheel carriage which has rear wheels larger than the front wheels. Its total weight is 50 tons. The barrel is engraved with the pictures of elephants, peacock and ducks. An 8 ft. long elevating screw was used for raising and lowering the barrel. About 100 kg. of gun power was required to fire a cannon ball weighing 50 kg. The cannon Bajrangvana has iron sleeves inside the barrel which gives it more resistance. It rests on a two wheeled gun carriage. It was moved by a limber with the help of 16 pairs of oxen. Raja Man Singh installed huge cutter and drill machine for making heavy cannons. The gun-foundry is consisted of furnace and a drilling room. It is spread over an area of 162 ft. x 57 ft. The metal was melt in the furnace and then molded in the required shape of cannon. The barrel was bored with the help of heavy drill bits. Eight pairs of oxen were employed on the spindle to run the big gears of drilling machine. The foundry has largest cutter of 15 ft. in length and the smallest being 7.5 ft. The cannons were used first time in India by Babar in the battle of Panipat in 1526 and in the battle of Khanwa in 1527.

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Royal Bath consists of two toilets and a royal bathroom. The summer toilet has three windows opening outside the palace complex. It has a hand-pulled ceiling fan. The winter toilet has fixed glass window panes. The bathroom of size 21'x21'x19' is embellished with white marble on floors and walls. The sunken marble bathtub is connected with hot and cold water canals. The steam bath was made available in a small enclosure of 13 ft. x 10 ft. through ducts connected to the central heating system. The hot water canals under the floor kept the interior warm.

The central heating system in the palace complex consists of a circular furnace of 4 ft. in diameter and 3.8 ft. in height. The top and bottom the furnace has thick copper plate. When the fuel was burnt in the furnace, the warm air gushed out into the canals under the floor, thus keeping the palace warm in winter.

Dining complex and Kitchen comprise a large hall measuring 76 ft. by 26 ft. with two dining halls. The halls are embellished with carved pillars of black sandstone. The floors are covered with cotton *duri* and *bajots* (low wooden stools) used for dining. There is a separate dining hall for royal ladies. The large ovens were installed in the kitchen apart from a separate oven for roasting meat.

Vijaygarh (Diva Burj) is seven-storeyed building with 101 winding steps. It lies in the south-west of the fort. It has gun bases in all the four corners. Mirza Sawai Jai Singh had imprisoned his brother Vijay Singh in this Burj, hence, it derived the name Vijaygarh.

Ranawat Chowk was the venue for Durbar held by Maharaja. This place is now being used for storing cannon wheels, iron scrap and equipment for making weapons. Tilak-ki-Chowki or Tilak-ki-Tibari was the site for coronation ceremony.

Water storage system is consisted of underground and overhead water tanks numbering five. Three are located in the southern courtyard; the fourth is near Aram Mandir and the

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fifth in the north-east corner of the fort. The rain water was collected through canals and stored in these tanks which was used for drinking and other purposes. The largest tank is 158'x138'x40' covered from the top. The roof of the tank is supported on 81 pillars inside the tank. It has storage capacity of 6 lacs gallons of water. The second tank measures 69'x52'x52' size. There are nine holes in the roof of this tank and a room under each hole. The third tank is an open tank measuring 61'x52'x27' size. The fourth is located in Aram Mandir while the fifth tank in the north-east was meant for emergency use. These are covered tanks. The Sagar lake was the main source of water in the fort. The water in large leather bags was carried by elephants to fill the tanks. Besides, water in small containers was also pulled up by rope to fill the large tank.

Tunnels in Jaigarh fort are long and narrow, covered and uncovered leading to all parts of the fort. A long tunnel of 116 ft. near Lakshmi Vilas connects Lalit Mandir. The tunnel between kitchen and Lalit Mandir is 107 ft. long which is also close to Aram Mandir. A 93 ft. long tunnel runs parallel to the puppet show theatre leading to the courtyard of the Vilas Mandir.

Armoury Gallery displays medieval rockets, guns of matchlock, flintlock and jujawal (camel gun), war maps, plans and a number of cannons that were used in various battles. Cannon Nagin is unique six barrel cannon with serpent pattern, hence called Nagin, an Indian term for a female serpent. The cannon could fire six shots from its barrel. It was carried to the battlefield of Rajmahal in 1748, at Bagru in 1749, at Luniwas in 1750 and at Deedwana in 1754. It was made in the foundry of Jaigarh.

Cannon Singhvan was made in 1701 at Jaigarh. It was used by Sawai Jai Singh-II in the battle of Thun in 1722-23 and against Rao Budh Singh of Bundi in 1730. His forces also used this cannon against Nadir Shah at Bhatinda in 1740. Sawai Pratap Singh used it in the battle of Rajgarh in 1781 against Rao Raja Pratap Singh of Macheri and at Lalsot in 1786 against Mahadji Scindia's general Deboigne.

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Cannon Dhoomvan was also made at Jaigarh in 1622. It was used by Mirza Raja Jai Singh and his successors. Jai Singh helped Dara Shikoh at Kandhar in 1642 against Shah Shafi, the king of Iran. Sawai Jai Singh-II used this cannon against Rao Budh Singh of Bundi in 1735. Maharaja Ishwari Singh used it against Madho Singh-I and his allies in the battle of Raj Mahal in 1748.

Cannon Nahar Mukhi was casted in the gun foundry of Jaigarh fort in the year 1675. The tip of the barrel is in the shape of a Nahar (lion) and hence its name. This cannon was used by Sawai Jai Singh-II against Churaman Jat at Kama in 1708 and against Baji Rao Peshwa in 1736 on the frontiers of Rajputana.

Karak Bijli was made during the reign of Bhagwant Das. It is a flat trajectory cannon and light in weight as compare to other cannons. The cannon was used by the forces of Maharaja of Sawai Man Singh-II in the battles fought in Bihar, Orissa, Bengal, Deccan etc.

Badli cannon was made in 1599. It was used by Maharaja Man Singh-I and his successors. Mirza Raja Jai Singh used it against the rebels of Balkh and Kandhar in 1651. He also used it against Shivaji in 1659 when the fort of Pundhar was captured and Shivaji was sent to Delhi.

Cannon Madhuri was casted in 1752. It was used by Sawai Madho Singh-I in the battle of Deedwana in 1754, battle of Barwara and Tonk in 1757, battle of Rampura in 1759. This cannon was also used by Sawai Pratap Singh in 1781 at Rajgarh, in 1782 at Baswa and Bhandarej, in 1786 at Lalsot and in 1786 at Toda Bhim.

Besides, there are other cannons on display in the gallery namely Banjari cannon, Ramvan, Shivvan, Mulk-Maidan, Fatehjang and Sherjung.

Collection Gallery displays the artifacts like treasury lock, oil container, wine container, coin container, war drums, smoking pipes, medals, playing cards (ganjifa) painted with lacquer work, leather belt (Padtala) etc. Treasury lock was

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made of iron and was a complex mechanical device which required five keys simultaneously to open it. The treasury was guarded by the loyal men of Quiledar. The keys were place in the hands of two trusted Quiledars of Maharaja. The oil containers were made of camel leather which had a high storing capacity of oil. The oil was used for lighting purposes as well as during enemy attack when hot oil was poured over them. Wine container (Batkadi) displayed in the gallery is cylindrical in shape with a semi-circular base. It is made of copper. The coin containers of various sizes and shapes were produced for keeping booty brought from different campaigns of Jaipur rulers on behalf of Mughal rulers. The inner side is fitted with wood while the outer side is made of copper. The war drum is made of copper and animal skin covering the top. The medals displayed at Jaigarh are mainly from the period of Maharaja Sawai Man Singh-II. They depict the various events of the life of this great statesman such as his coronation, his fascination for games like polo etc. The medals are made of mainly copper and mixed metal. They are ornamented with beautiful inlaid designs and patterns.

History

Before the advent of Kachhawa Rajputs in Rajputana during 10th century AD, Meenas were enjoying tribal sovereignty in the region including Amber. They were devotees of goddess Amba, probably after whose name Amber came into existence. Kachhawas claimed their origin from the descendents of Kush, son of Lord Ram of Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh. The descendants of Kush were called Kushwa which were later pronounced as Kachhawa. After many generations, Kachhawas migrated to Gwalior, Narwar and Dubkhund in Madhya Pradesh where they reigned for centuries and built forts and palaces.

Raja Sod Dev of Gwalior subdued Meenas of Dausa and built a fort which laid the foundation of Kachhawa dynasty in Rajputana. Duley Rai, son of Raja Sod Dev married Sujan Kanwar, daughter of Raja Ralansingh of Moran in Dausa and got a part territory of Dausa in dowry. Duley Rai subsequently

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conquered the remaining territory of Dausa from Badgujars and expanded it upto Khoh by massacring a large number of Meenas who were taking bath in a pond on the occasion of Diwali at Khoh. Duley Rai shifted the capital from Dausa to Khoh. He advanced further and captured Manchi (Ramgarh) held by Meenas and shifted the capital from Khoh to Manchi. He built a temple dedicated to Jamwa Mata, a female deity, at Ramgarh. Gaitor and Jhotwara also came under the control of Kachhawas. Duley Rai died in a battle with Meenas near Jamwa Mata Mandir in 1036. His son Kakil Dev came to the throne and ruled till 1039. Maidal son of Kakil subdued Meenas of Amber and built a fort. The tribal sovereignty of Meenas came to an end with the emergence of Rajput power in Rajputana.

Hanudev came to the throne followed by his son Janhad. Janhad had five sons - Pajoni, Looni, Jaitsi, Panchayan and Kanad. Pajoni was an able, brave and efficient ruler. His sister was married to Raja Prithviraj Chauhan of Delhi. Pajoni accompanied Prithviraj Chauhan in many expeditions. He defeated the rulers of Patan and Bundelkhand and annexed their territories to Ajmer. He died in a battle at Kannauj. He was succeeded by his son Malaisi. He also served Prithviraj Chauhan like his father. Their valour has been lauded in the '*Prithviraj Raso*'. Malaisi had six wives and 32 sons.

Bijaldev ascended the throne in 1146. His son Rajdev was next in the line to the throne who seated in 1182. He built Rajola pond at Amber after the name of his wife Ralade. Kalhandev succeeded to his father in 1216. He was an efficient ruler. His son Kuntal came to power in 1276. He built Kuntalgarh fort and a water reservoir. He helped the famine hit Marwar. Kuntal was succeeded by his son Junsi in 1366 followed by Narsingh in 1368. He had three sons - Banbeer, Jaisi and Kanghal. Banbeer became the ruler of Amber in 1428. He had 6 wives and 6 sons. The next in the line was his son Udran who came to the throne in 1439. He was succeeded by his son Chandrasen in 1467. Prithviraj ascended the throne of Amber in 1503 and died in 1527. Prithviraj had nine wives

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and 19 sons but only two came to the throne of Amber. Puranmal ascended the throne in 1527 and died in a battle against Shekhawat in 1533. Bhinv Singh reigned for a short period and died in 1536. Ratan Singh could not rule the state efficiently and died in 1547. Aaskaran and Rajsingh too ruled for a short period. Bharmal seated on the throne in 1548 and died in 1573. He had nine wives and 10 sons.

Bhagwant Das became the ruler of Amber in 1573. He was a confidant of Mughal emperor Akbar. He died of illness in 1589. Raja Man Singh was a commander in Mughal army. He won the battles of Bengal, Bihar, Orrisa and Kabul. His son, Jagat Singh also joined Mughal campaign. However, Jagat Singh died early when Raja Man Singh was on the throne. He had 10 wives of which seven committed sati. Man Singh died in 1614. He had 26 wives, 11 sons and 5 daughters of which 11 wives committed sati. His ten sons had already died during his reign. Bhav Singh inherited the throne for a short period. He accompanied Prince Parvez in the campaign against Malick Umbar in south. He was an alcoholic and died in 1620 at the age of 44 years. He had no son. His nephew Maha Singh, son of Jagat Singh seated on the throne of Amber. He too was an alcoholic and womanizer. He died in 1622. Mirza Raja Jai Singh came to the throne at the age of 11 years. He was a learned, efficient, brave and generous ruler. He learnt Urdu, Hindi, Sanskrit and Persian languages. He served the Mughal emperor Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb during the period 1622-1668. He led the campaign on Gaya, Gokunda and Bijapur in 1636 during the reign of Shahjahan. He conquered Kabul and Kandhar in 1638 and earned the title of Mirza Raja from Mughal emperor. Aurangzeb sent an expedition under the command of Mirza Raja Jai Singh to Pune to subdue Shivaji. Jai Singh invaded Purander fort in Pune with heavy artillery and detained Shivaji who later escaped from the captivity. Mirza Raja was poisoned by his son, Kirat Singh.

He was succeeded by his son Ram Singh. He was an efficient ruler like his father. He fought the Assam campaign

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which lasted for years and finally resulted into a peace treaty. He joined his son Kishan Singh in the conquest of Afghanistan. Ram Singh died of illness in 1688. Kishan Singh had already died in a battle in the south. He had 8 wives. Bishan Singh, grandson of Ram Singh came to the throne and defeated Jats of Bharatpur near Mathura in 1689. Bishan Singh died in 1699 in Kabul. He had two sons, Sawai Jai Singh and Vijay Singh. Sawai Jai Singh was married to Princess Chandra Kunwari, daughter of Rana Sanga of Mewar from whom Sawai Madho Singh was born. Jats of Nawangarh were eyesore to Mughals who were plundering Agra, Mathura and Bharatpur. The emperor sent Jai Singh to crush the Jat revolt. Mohan Singh of Chomu accompanied Jai Singh in all the campaigns. Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah bestowed upon the title of 'Rajrajeshwar', 'Rajadhiraj' 'Maharajamaraj' to Sawai Jai Singh along with Mahi Martab.

Sawai Jai Singh was appointed Subedar of Malwa in 1730. He built observatories at Delhi, Banaras, Ujjain and Jaipur, besides Chandra Mahal, Govind Bhawan and Talkatora. He founded the Jaipur city in 1727. He died after a short illness in 1743. He had 24 wives and three sons - Shiv Singh, Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh. Ishwari Singh seated on the throne of Jaipur in 1743 as Shiv Singh had already died. Sawai Jai Singh had committed to Rana Jagat Singh of Mewar that Madho Singh would be the next heir of Jaipur. Ishwari Singh was an able and brave ruler. Rana Jagat Singh apprised Ishwari Singh of the promise of Sawai Jai Singh but Ishwari Singh did not step down which moved Rana Jagat Singh to attack Jaipur. Ishwari Singh sought help from Maratha leader Aapaji Scindia against Mewar. On the other hand, Kota and Bundi joined hands with Mewar against Jaipur. Rana Jagat Singh faced the defeat at the hands of Kachhawa ruler. He again made an assault on Jaipur in 1747 along with Malharrao Hulkar. Ishwari Singh sought help from Hargovind Nataji. A fierce battle took place near Devli on the bank of river Banas in which Rana was defeated. Later, Madho Singh was awarded with the jagir of Tonk, Phagi, Rampura, Malpura

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and Bhanpura. Ishwari Singh committed suicide by consuming poison. He had nine wives and a son who died early.

After the death of Ishwari Singh, Madho Singh came to the throne. He was also an efficient ruler and reigned for 17 years. He founded the city Sawai Madhopur after his name. He neutralized the Jat revolt against Mughals. He brought Ranthambhor fort under his control in 1758. He paid tributes to Maratha leaders to mitigate war like situation. He built the forts of Moti Dungri and Sanganer. He died in 1767. Sawai Madho Singh had two wives and three sons – Raghuveer Singh (died early), Prithvi Singh and Pratap Singh. The prince regent Prithvi Singh succeeded to the throne at the age of five. Later, he became an independent ruler of Alwar. He died at young age. He had two sons who died young. Pratap Singh ascended the throne of Jaipur in 1778 at the age of 14. During this time, Marathas were plundering Rajputana. They were once defeated by Pratap Singh in 1786. Mahadji Scindia reached Lalsote near Jaipur with a large contingent to extract an outstanding amount from Pratap Singh. Pratap Singh and Maharaja Vijay Singh of Marwar joined hands together and overthrew Maratha troops from Rajputana in 1789. Later, in 1791, Tikaji Hulkar overpowered Pratap Singh and imposed heavy levy on him. Pratap Singh died in 1803 at the age of 39. Sawai Pratap Singh was a lover of art and literature. He was a poet. He wrote books in Mewari, Gujarati, Punjabi, Braj and Rajasthani languages. He wrote devotional songs of Radha and Krishan. Maharaja Jagat Singh ascended the throne of Jaipur. The plundering activities of Marathas had weakened Rajputana economically. Mughal empire had been replaced with British government. A treaty between British government and Maharaja Jagat Singh protected Jaipur from Maratha's assault.

Jai Singh-III, son of Jagat Singh was a regent prince. Jhutaram, a noble, removed the minister Rawal Verisal appointed by the British government and ruled the state arbitrary. Maharaja Jai Singh died at age of 17. Jhutaram was suspected behind the murder of Jai Singh. British government

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imprisoned Jhutaram and reinstated Rawal Verisal. Verisal died in 1837 and his son Shiv Singh was appointed in his place. Maharaja Jai Singh's son Ram Singh-II ascended the throne of Jaipur at the age of two years. The state was administered by British political agent and the ministers appointed by the government. Ram Singh grew up and took the reign in his hands in 1857. He turned out to be an able and efficient ruler. Maharaja beautified the Jaipur city. He developed municipality and drainage system in Jaipur. He built Rambaug, Albert Hall, Maharaja Public Library, Maharaja college, roads, parks, dispensaries, water reservoirs, railways, schools, colleges etc. British government was happy over his good work and ensured 19 shots of cannon in place of 17 in his honour. Maharaja Ram Singh died without son in 1880.

Madho Singh-II came to the throne in 1880. He carried forward the development work of his predecessor. A woman and veterinary hospitals were opened. A railway line from Jaipur to Sawai Madhopur was opened during his reign in 1907. The city was electrified by gas lamps. The canals for irrigation were built. He went to London to attend the coronation ceremony of Emperor Edward. He took along with him all food items including big silver jars of Ganga water. He died in 1922. He had no son and adopted one Mor Mukut Singh from the royal family of Isarda who reigned by name of Man Singh-II till Jaipur merged into the State of Rajasthan in 1949. He died 1970.

Sawai Bhawani Singh was born to Sawai Man Singh-II in 1931. After the death of his father, Bhawani Singh took over as the last titular Maharaja of Jaipur in the post independence era until the abolition of Privy Purse and royal entitlements in a constitutional amendment in 1971. Bhawani Singh joined the Indian Army and rose to the status of Commanding Officer in 1968. He also fought in the Indo-Pak war of 1971 and earned the country's second highest gallantry award Mahavir Chakra. He was promoted to the rank of Brigadier in 1974. He was Indian High Commissioner to Brunei from 1994-1997. He presently resides in the City Palace and

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still honored and referred to as His Highness, Maharaja (Brigadier) Bhawani Singh.

Tourist attractions at Jaipur

Jantar Mantar, a stone observatory was built by Jai Singh. Its shape and setting are scientifically designed. Ram Yantra was used for gauging altitudes. **City Palace** is located near Jantar Mantar. **Hawa Mahal** is a five-storey building erected in 1799. **Govind Devji** temple dedicated to Lord Krishan is located in the Jai Niwas garden. The image of Govind Devji was brought from a temple in Vrindavan and installed in this temple by Sawai Jai Singh-II as his family deity. **Swargasuli (Isar Lat)** was built by Sawai Ishwari Singh in 1749 to commemorate his grand victory. **Albert Hall** designed by Sir Swinton Jacob is a specimen of Indo-Sarcenic style of architecture. It has collection of sculptures, paintings, an Egyptian mummy and Persian carpet. **Doll Museum** has collection of dolls of various countries. **Galtaji** is an ancient temple of Sun situated picturesquely on a hillock. It has natural spring and reservoir enclosed by hills. **B.M. Birla Planetarium** offers audio-visual education about our planet system. **Laxmi Narayan temple** built of white marble is situated at the foot hills of Moti Doongri.

Amber Palace, Jaipur

Amber Palace is situated in Amber town of Jaipur district at a distance of 10 km from Jaipur railway station. It was built by Raja Man Singh-I during his reign (1589-1614). Subsequent rulers added more mansions in the palace complex. Legend has it that Amber got its name after Ambikeshwar Mahadev temple built by Kachhawa ruler Kakil Dev in 11th century AD. Some believed that it was named after goddess Amba, worshipped by Meenas.

Amber Palace can be accessed through Suraj Pole which leads to an extensive court of Jaleb Chowk. The Jaleb Chowk further leads to inner chambers of the palace. An open arched pavilion called Baradari is located in the centre of the

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courtyard. It has twelve arched openings resting on red sandstone pillars chiseled beautifully with floral bases. The twelve chambers of the queens open onto the courtyard. The palace room of the prince is on the first storey and is embellished with frescoes and coloured tiles. The façade of the palace is adorned with floral arches and secured by sandstone grilles in front. The stairways coming down from the first storey fall separately in each chamber of the queen.

Mirza Raja Jai Singh (1621-67) built Dewan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience) which represents Mughal-Rajput architecture. It is also known as Jai Mandir. Dewan-i-Am (Hall of Public Audience) was also built by him where he used to listen to his people. The royal ladies witnessed the proceedings in the hall through latticed windows and perforated balconies.

Sheesh Mahal (Mirror Palace) is the main attraction of Dewan-i-Khas. The rulers called on special guests in the Sheesh Mahal. It is decorated with cut-mirrors on walls and ceilings in floral and geometric patterns. The mosaic of coloured cut-glass affords a dazzling interior. The images of Radha and Krishan are composed of cut-glass. The arched alcoves are similarly decorated. The white marble panels are carved with the images of flower and tendril in relief pattern. During summer, the arched openings were covered with screens of aromatic grass or *Khas* sprinkled with water for cool breeze. The hot and cold water canals inside the palace regulated the temperature during summer and winter. Char-Bagh (Four Garden) opposite to Sheesh Mahal is laid out in Mughal style with running water canals flanked by arcaded pavilions.

To the east of Ganesh pole lies the Sukh Mandir (Pleasure Palace), the retiring room for rulers. It has spacious courtyard. The interior is decorated with panels portraying secular figures and monuments. A beautiful marble cascade in the centre enhances its beauty. The doors of Sukh Mandir are ornamented with inlaid sandalwood and ivory. A similar unserviceable door is also showcased.

Zanani Deorhi (Ladies Apartment) was meant for royal ladies like Rani Shringarde Kankawat and Rani Mahadevi

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Katoch of Kangra who were married to Raja Man Singh. Rani Chandrawat was married to Mirza Raja Jai Singh. Rani Shringarde Kankawat got built the Jagat Shiromani temple in the memory of her son, Jagat Singh. Rani Mahadevi funded for addition of *Toran* gates of Jagannath Puri in Orrisa.

Rasoda (Royal Kitchen) was meant for the ruler, his family and guests. It has two sets of kitchens. The first is adjacent to the Bhojanshala (Dining Room) and the other near Tripolia gate used by the palace staff. Bhojanshala is located north of Sukh Mandir. The proficient cooks were employed for preparing food for the royal family. Ovens with multiple mouths were installed in the kitchen.

Hammam (Turkish Bath) lies close to Dewan-i-Khas. The hot and cold water was supplied separately in the tubs. Similar provision was also made for lavatories. A hearth outside Hammam was source of hot water. The change and massage rooms are small chambers. The palace has about hundred lavatories. Some of them were exclusively used by the ruler and the royal family. There are three underground water storage tanks located at Jaleb Chowk, Dewan-i-Am and the Man Singh Palace. The rain water was stored in these tanks.

The tunnel of Amber palace is connected with Jaigarh fort. It is subterraneous till a point near the Rang Mahal. Thereafter, it runs roofless, on the surface upto Jaigarh. The tunnel is accessible from the Man Singh Palace, Zanani Deorhi and Dewan-i-Khas. The lit torches were used in the tunnel for light.

Temples

Sheela Mata temple dedicated to goddess Kali, is located near Singh Pole. It is built of white marble. The temple houses a sculptured image of goddess Kali in black stone, brought by Raja Man Singh from Jessore in 1604. The images of goddess Durga, the *Giver of Power* and the goddess Saraswati, the *Giver of Knowledge* also adorn the sanctum. The temple has silver doors.

Following are temples of historical significance located in the close vicinity of Amber Palace.

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Jagat Shiromani temple was built by Rani Shringarde Kankawat of Raja Man Singh during 1599-1608. The temple is adorned with the image of Lord Krishan in black stone. The doorway is carved in marble and flanked by sculptures of elephant on either side. Suhag Mandir consisting of two rooms is built in rectangular shape. Laxmi Narayan temple is located near Jagat Shiromani. Ambikeshwar Mahadev temple was built by Kakil Dev, which was renovated by Raja Ram Singh II. Sun Temple is situated on a hillock looking below the cenotaph of Prithvi Raj. The temple was built in 954 A.D.

Panna Mian Ki Baori was built by Sawai Jai Singh in the 17th century. It is located just outside the palace. It is a step-well flanked by double storey veranda. Jama Masjid was built by Raja Bharmal in 1569 AD.

City Palace, Jaipur

The City Palace is situated at the heart of old city of Jaipur known as Pink city. It was built by Mirza Raja Sawai Jai Singh and designed by Vidyadhar Bhattacharya in Mughal-Rajput style of architecture. The palace is approached through Ganesh pole, where the Transport Gallery is located in an arcaded corridor displaying palanquins, buggies, chariots and a few small cannons. The second arched gateway opens onto an extensive court crowned with an emphatic Dewan-i-Khas in the centre flanked by Chandra Mahal on one side. Dewan-i-Khas, is an arched pavilion with flat roof supported on rows of twin marble pillars, adorned with floral bases. Its eaves rest on decorated brackets. The pavilion is painted bright pink from outside with white lines in geometric pattern.

Two huge silver jars or the Gangajali are objects of attractions in Dewan-i-Khas. These silver jars have been recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records as largest silver objects in the world. Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh-II got these silver jars built for carrying Ganges water on his voyage to England to attend the coronation ceremony of Edward VII in the year 1902. The jars were made by two silversmiths of Jaipur - Govind Ram and Madhav. Each Jar

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was made out of 14000 Jhar Shahi (Jaipur coins) silver coins issued from the Kapatdwara treasury of Jaipur state in the year 1894. The coins were melted into silver sheets. The silver sheets were beaten on the wooden mould to get the shape of jars. No soldering was done and the entire process took two years to make the jars. The silversmiths also shaped its lids and handles. The circular base with wheels was added for easy movement. Ladders were made for reaching the mouth of the jar. Each of the jars weighs around 345 kg. Its height is 5' 3" and circumference is 14' 10" having capacity of 900 gallon (4091 litres).

The seven-storey Chandra Mahal (Moon Palace) is the residence of the present Maharaja. The yellow-painted Chandra Mahal has five-colour flag of Sawai Jaipur on the top. Mughal emperor conferred the title of 'Sawai' to Jai Singh as a mark of distinction (literally, one quarter more than his contemporaries), hence, small flag (denoting one quarter more) above the main flag is mounted on the top of Chandra Mahal. The flag was in triangular shape with the sequence of colour - red, white, yellow, green and blue till 1930. It was changed to rectangular shape with sequence of colour - red, yellow, white, green and blue by Maharaja Man Singh-II. Man Singh presented the old flag of Amber to Thakur Manohardas of Chomu where it is still regarded by Nathawat Rajput.

Each storey of Chandra Mahal is named as Sukh Niwas, Rang Mandir, Sheesh Mahal, Shobha Niwas, Chhavi Niwas and Mukut Mahal. The walls of veranda are adorned with full-size portraits of Maharaja of Jaipur. Sukh Niwas is the first storey of Chandra Mahal. It is embellished with floral motif. Rang Mandir, the third storey is decorated with inlay of mirrors on the walls, pillars and ceilings. The fourth storey is Shobha Niwas embellished with mirrors in sparkling colours with lustrous gold. The fifth storey is Chhavi Niwas. Sheesh Mahal is the sixth storey and the seventh storey is Mukut Mahal. The walls and ceilings of Sheesh Mahal are embellished with inlay of colourful glasses in floral pattern and the pillars in stucco pattern.

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Rajendra pole, an arched gateway, also called Sarhad-ki-Deorhi is flanked by marble sculpture of elephant on either side. These sculptures were brought from Zanana Mahal to Rajendra pole in 1931 to mark the birth of Maharaja Bhawani Singh who was the direct male heir to the Jaipur throne in two generations. The marble panel on the gateway has curving of arabesque in relief pattern. Rajendra pole leads to Gainda-ki-Deorhi where Mubarak Mahal (Palace of Reception) is located in the centre of the courtyard. It was built by Maharaja Madho Singh-II (1880-1922) for his royal guests. Sir Samuel Swinton Jacob had designed this two-storey Mubarak Mahal in 1890. It is masonry work of stone and lime plaster. The interior has fine plaster walls in designed pattern. The first storey is encircled by an arcaded corridor secured by balustrades. The roof has carved stone balustrade on all sides. The flat ceiling of the corridor on the ground floor is supported on semi-circle arches on pillars. The building was once used as Mahakma Khas (Cabinet Secretariat) before converting it into a museum. The first floor houses a museum while the ground floor is occupied by museum officials and houses Pothikhana. The museum has collection of ninety three manuscripts of Pothikhana and twenty manuscripts of art objects. The museum displays embroidered Kashmiri shawls, shawls made in Persia and Middle East, Kinkhab from Banaras and Aurangabad, silk scarves, muslins from Dhaka, Chaugas, Angarkhas, Atamsukh of Maharajas of Jaipur and dresses in brocade and silk with gold lace of Maharanis of Jaipur. One gold embroidered Rajputani costume of the queen and a long quilted robe of Madho Singh-I (1750-67) made from gold-encrusted pink silk are the attractions in the museum.

The Arms and Armoury Museum (Sileh Khana) in Anand Mahal has collection of wide range of ancient weaponry like swords, spheres, Indian and European guns, pistols, flintlocks, blunderbusses, shields, long rifles, daggers, protective gears, bows and arrows, maces, baghnakhs, khamvas with gold, silver and ivory handles, gun powder boxes made of horn and shell embellished with motifs of ivory and pearl etc. The Khanda

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(broad curved sword) of Maharaja Man Singh-I and helmet of Mirza Raja Jai Singh are also displayed. A dagger with inbuilt twin pistol is amazing.

Two-storey Ridhisidhi pole leads to the Pritam Niwas chowk with four decorated gates. The Peacock gate is decorated with paintings of nature and peacock. Maharaja Pratap Singh (1778-1803) had built the Sarvotobhadra or Dewan-i-Am during the last quarter of 18th century and is adorned with a largest chandelier. Its carved cornices are embellished with flower and leaf motifs in striking red and green colours. The royal ladies used to watch the proceedings in the hall through stone screens. It houses an art gallery of miniature paintings of Bikaner, Bundi, Kota, Jodhpur, Kishangarh, Deccan, Malwa, Persian and Mughal schools.

Nahargarh Fort, Jaipur

Nahargarh fort was built by Mirza Raja Sawai Jai Singh in 1734 AD. Legend has it that spirit of Prince Nahar Singh Bhomia of Amber haunted over this place and obstructed the construction of the fort. After consulting Rajpurohit Ratnakar Pondrik and performing tantrik rituals, the spirit was appeased by constructing a temple and naming the fort after him, hence, it was called Nahargarh. Some believed that the region was inhabitated by tigers (Nahar), and the fort got the name Nahargarh. The fort is perched on top of the hill about 600 ft. above the city surrounded by dense forest, unfolding a panoramic view of Jaipur city with cluster of houses, straight lanes and by lanes on one side and the spots of Jaigarh, Amber palace, Jal Mahal and Kanak Vrindavan on the other. The cluster of domed roof of Nahargarh fort topped by finials gives the edifice a distinct look. The fort is painted yellow and houses Sudarshan temple, Sileh Khana, hospitality room of Sawai Madho Singh, soldiers' quarters and underground water tank. Europeans took refuge at Nahargarh during 1857 revolt.

Sawai Ram Singh-II and Sawai Madho Singh-II built nine small palaces in Nahargarh fort viz. Suraj Prakash, Jawahar Prakash, Khushal Prakash, Laxmi Prakash, Chand Prakash,

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Lalit Prakash, Anand Prakash, Ratan Prakash and Basant Prakash. Sawai Madho Singh-I also built Hawa Mandir for his guests. The palaces have marble floors whereas the courtyard is laid out in sandstone. The palaces are embellished with beautiful frescoes in floral and geometric pattern. Each palace consists of 3-4 small rooms extended with a pillared veranda of multi-foiled arches and small courtyard. The rooms decorated moderately were used as bedroom, drawing room, dressing room and kitchen. The kitchens in simple designs with mild colours have arched niches and chimney. Each palace has attached toilet. The rooms are well ventilated, symmetrically built and uniformly decorated.

Hawa Mahal, Jaipur

Hawa Mahal (Palace of Winds) is located along the main street at Badi Chaupad near City palace and Jantar Mantar. It was built by Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh in 1799 AD in pink sandstone in Rajput style. Sawai Pratap Singh was a devotee of Lord Krishan and he got built this palace in the shape of a *mukut* or crown that adorns the head of Lord Krishan. The five-storey Hawa Mahal has pyramid facade made up of small casement, each with tiny latticed windows and arched roofs with hanging cornices. It is 87 feet high structure with a mass of semi-octagonal bays, carved sandstone grills, finials and domes which give this palace its unique facade. The interior is void of any decoration. The thrust of cool breeze through its window screens and perforated balconies can be felt inside the palace. It was built for women of royal family who observed the Purdah (veil) system. They could view the activities on the streets without being noticed from outside. It represents true colours and culture of the Pink city. A part of the palace has been converted into a museum.

Taragarh Fort, Ajmer

Taragarh fort is situated on the high summit at an altitude of 2855 ft. above sea level in Ajmer city. Jayraj Chauhan founded the city Ajaymeru, the present Ajmer and built

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Taragarh fort in 7th century AD. Ajmer is picturesquely surrounded by Aravalli range on all sides with a few streams of Gaukund, Panchkund, Kahbai, Chavanda and Agustji. Ajmer, the district headquarters is located at 26°29' north latitude and 74°40' east longitude, bounded by Jaipur in the northeast, Tonk in the east, Bhilwara in the south, Pali in the west and Nagaur in the northwest. The fort is 13 km from Ajmer railway station. It is 130 km from Jaipur and 378 km from Delhi, connected with good rail/road network.

Taragarh fort is also known as Bithalgarh and Ajaymerugarh. Legend has it that Prithviraj, son of Rana Raimal of Mewar added more mansions in the fort and named it Taragarh after his wife Tarabai. Bithaldas Gaur, a commander in the Mughal army during the reign of Shahjahan, expanded the fort by constructing new buildings and the fort was called Bithalgarh after Bithaldas. The fort can be accessed after 5-km uphill drive that continues to unfold the scenic beauty of Ajmer city on each passing curve. The fort is accessible through Laxmi pole, Hathi pole, Vijay pole, Phoota darwaja, Bhawani pole, Arkote darwaja and Bada darwaja. Its 20 ft. thick rampart consists of 14 bastions viz. Shrangar Chanwari, Aarpar ka Atta, Janu Nayak, Pipali, Ibrahim Shahid, Dorai, Bandra, Imli, Khidki, Fateh, Sayyad, Hussain. Khidki Burj is the highest bastion. The fort is entirely in ruins at present.

Akbar stayed at Taragarh fort on many occasions and built Akbar palace in 1570 taking architectural features of Fatehpur Sikri. It had minarets on four corners, presently in ruins. Jahangir also stayed in this fort for three years from 1613-1616. British government had opened Rajputana Museum in Akbar palace in 1908 which had collections of antiques of Hindu deities, coins, paintings, armoury, inscriptions etc. Now Samrat Prithviraj Chauhan Museum is built at a distance of 2.5 km below the Taragarh fort on a small hill flanked by statue of Prithviraj Chauhan on the horseback in black stone. The fort houses 13th century Dargah of Meeran Sahib, water reservoirs – Gol Jhalra, Nana Sahib ka Jhalra, Ibrahim Sharief ka Jhalra, Bada Jhalra and store rooms. The water reservoirs

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were carved out of rocks. Dargah of Meeran Sahib has three degs (cauldrons) each having capacity of preparing 3200 kg., 2400 kg. and 1600 kg. sweet rice called *niyaz*. The *niyaz* when dried into powder, is called *tabarrukat*. Two degs were offered by the Maharaja of Gwalior on the fulfillment of his wish for a child. Third deg was given by the minister of Mughal emperor Akbar after winning Chittaurgarh in 1560. The 70 ft. high Buland Darwaja at Dargah was built by Akbar in 1560. A court in the fort, now in rubble, was once supported on 11 ft. high 30 pillars. The mansions in the fort were adorned with beautiful murals, now in ruins. The water reservoirs have dried up. A small population lives in the fortified area. The continued construction of new houses and buildings has reduced the size of the monument considerably. Dargah of Hazrat Meeran Syed Hussain Khingsawar Mashahadi Sahib is renovated and modified with a high and large domical ceiling embellished with mosaic of coloured cut-mirrors.

History

Chauhans migrated from Uttar Pradesh to western Rajputana. Vasudev Chauhan conquered Sambar from Parmar Rajputs in 551 AD and established the dynasty of Shakambri Chauhans. He also built a temple of his Kuldevi Shakambri. Mohd. Gajnavi attacked Taragarh in 1024 during the reign of Govindraj but failed to subdue it. Ajmer was made capital by Ajayraj Chauhan. He was succeeded by his son Arnoraj who built Anasagar lake at Ajmer. Arnoraj expanded the territories of his kingdom, bringing Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh under the powerful Chauhan domain. He defeated Parmars of Malwa. Raja Jaisingh Sidhraj and Kumarpal of Solanki clan of Gujarat defeated Arnoraj in 1142. Arnoraj was assassinated by his son Jagdev in 1157 and consequently inherited the throne, but he was removed by his brother Vigrehraj, also known as Beesaldev. Beesaldev defeated Parmars, Solankis and Chalukyas and subjugated their territories. He also attacked Chittaur and annexed a large part of it to his state. Beesaldev built a Vishnu temple and a Sanskrit school at Ajmer, which later came to be known as '*Adhai-din-ka-Jhonpra*'. He engraved

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hit Ghauri in the neck. He fell down and died instantly. To evade maltreatment at the hands of Muslim army, Chand Bardai pulled out his dagger and stabbed Prithviraj; in the next moment he stabbed himself with the same dagger and both died on the spot.

GovindrajII ascended the throne of Ajmer but he was removed by his uncle Hariraj. Qutubddin Aibak and Balban retained their hold over Ajmer after Ghauri. Rana Keshtra Singh of Mewar captured Ajmer from Muslims in 1364 AD. Rathores of Marwar conquered Ajmer in 1438. However, Muhammad Khilji of Malwa snatched it from Rathores and appointed Mallu Khan its governor. Prithviraj, son of Rana Raimal of Mewar killed Mallu Khan and occupied Taragarh which remained under Mewar until it was conquered by Sultan Bahadurshah of Gujarat in 1533. Thereafter, it fell into the hands of Raja Maldev of Marwar. He got built palaces and bastions in Taragarh fort. Shershah Suri conquered Ajmer and Jodhpur from Maldev in 1544. After the death of Shershah Suri, Maldev recaptured Jodhpur and Ajmer in 1545. Haji Khan, governor of Shershah Suri and the ruler of Mewat occupied Ajmer. Maldev launched an attack on Ajmer. Haji Khan sought military help from the rulers of Udaipur, Bundi, Merta and Bikaner. Maldev fell weak before the combined army of Haji Khan and returned to Jodhpur. Rana Udai Singh asked for gold, elephants and a female dancer from Haji Khan in return of his military help. Haji Khan turned down his demand and attacked Mewar instead. This time Haji sought help from Maldev who reached Ajmer with a large contingent. A fierce battle took place between the forces of Ajmer and Marwar on one side and Udaipur, Bundi, Merta and Bikaner on the other. Haji Khan defeated Rana Udai Singh and his allies. Maldev got Merta in return of his help to Haji Khan.

Mughal emperor Akbar overthrew Haji Khan from Ajmer. Akbar built a palace in Taragarh fort, known as Akbar palace. Jahangir built a palace Chashma-e-Noor near Taragarh in 1615. Sheer Chashma was constructed by Shershah Suri. Mahabat Khan was appointed governor of Ajmer by

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two plays – *'Lalit Vigrehraj'* and *'Harikeli'* on the walls of the temple which were destroyed by Ghauri in 1192. *'Harikeli'* was written by Vigrehraj while *'Lalit Vigrehraj'* was written by a poet Someshwar. Vigrehraj ruled for a decade and died in 1163. He was succeeded by his son, Amargangey who was followed by Prithviraj-II, son of Jagdev. Prithviraj died childless. Someshwar, son of Arnoraj inherited the throne and died in 1177. His 11 years old son Prithviraj-III came to the throne of Ajmer as prince regent. He defeated Pratihars, Chalukyas and Chandels and strengthened the boundaries of his kingdom. His mother Karpur Devi was the daughter of Raja Anangpal of Delhi. Anangpal had no son, so he entrusted the reign of Delhi to Prithviraj which envied Jaychandra.

Jaychandra organized *'svayambar'* of his daughter Sanyogita. Princes from various provinces were invited on the occasion except Prithviraj, rather his sculpture was installed at the main gate. Sanyogita loved Prithviraj and apprised him of the event. Prithviraj along with his troops in disguise reached Kannauj. Sanyogita put the garland on the sculptured image of Prithviraj. Prithviraj kidnapped her from the venue and married her at Ajmer. His troops kept the Kannauj forces at bay.

Mohd. Ghauri of Gajni captured the fort of Bhatinda in Punjab from Chauhans. Prithviraj defeated Mohd. Ghauri in the battle of Terain in 1191. In the second battle of Terain in 1192 Ghauri defeated Prithviraj. Prithviraj was detained and taken to Ajmer. His eyes were gauged out. Chand Bardai, a poet in the court of Prithviraj apprised Mohd. Ghauri of the archery skill of Prithviraj which interested Ghauri to see the same. Prithviraj who was chained heavily, was brought to the court of Ghauri. Ghauri was sitting in the overhanging balcony. Prithviraj's hands were unchained to hold the bow and arrow. Chand Bardai spoke a verse:

Char baans chaubis gaj, angul asht praman
Ta upar sultan hai mat chuke chauhan

On hearing the verse, Prithviraj Chauhan could assess the position of Ghauri in the court. He shot the arrow which

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Shahjahan. Shahjahan built 1240 ft. long wall and baths round the Anasagar lake. Aurangzeb also camped at Ajmer and fought battles against Marwar. Ajit Singh was appointed governor of Ajmer and Ahmedabad by Mughal emperor in 1719. Later, he was replaced with Hussain Khan. Maratha leader Hulkar plundered Ajmer in 1734.

Raja Abhay Singh of Marwar occupied Ajmer in 1743. Maratha leader Jayappa Scindia occupied Ajmer which later conquered by Rana Bhim Singh of Marwar. It was again occupied by Marathas in 1806. During 1857 revolt a large quantity of explosives was kept at Ajmer fort, defended by Bengal Native Infantry and Merwara Battalion. A peace treaty between Marathas and British government brought Ajmer under British control.

Tourist attractions in Ajmer city

Pushkar, a sacred pilgrimage of Hindus, is 13 km from the city. According to legend, Lord Brahma was searching a place to perform a 'Yagna'. A lotus fell from His hand at the place of present Pushkar and a lake emerged out. There are 52 Ghats at Pushkar lake. Raja Man Singh of Amber had built Man Mahal at Pushkar lake which has been converted into a hotel Sarovar run by RTDC. A temple of Brahmaji is located near the lake where an idol of four faced Brahmaji is enshrined in the central sanatorium. A cattle fair, known as Pushkar Fair is held annually during the full Moon day of Kartik (October-November). **Dargah of Khawaja Moinuddin Chisti** is a 12th century monument built of white marble with a domed roof. Dargah is also known as Khwaja Sahib or Khawaja Sharief or Ajmer Sharief which is regarded next to Mecca or Medina by the Muslims of South Asia. It is an important pilgrimage for all faiths. Moinuddin Chisti, a Sufi Saint from Iraq, reached India via Afghanistan for propagation of the teachings of Islam. He was a disciple of Gos-ul-Azam of Iraq. Moinuddin reached Ajmer in 1191 and died in 1235 at Ajmer. Akbar built Akbari Masjid of white marble in the courtyard of the Dargah. There are two degs (copper cauldrons) in the courtyard. Annual Urs is held at the Dargah

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Sharief to commemorate the death anniversary of the Saint. It is held from the 1st to 6th of the Islamic month of Rajab. **Adhai-din-ka-Jhonpra** is located near the Dargah Ajmer Sharief. Urs festival of Punjab Shah was held here annually for 2 ½ days, hence, got the name Adhai-di-ka-Jhonpra. **Foy Sagar lake** is 5 km from Pushkar. It was named after the engineer Foy who created it under a famine relief project. **Mayo Colle**ge at Ajmer was founded in 1875 AD only for the princes. It was built by the British government after name of Viceroy Mayo who visited Ajmer. Now it is a public school open to all. Best season to visit Ajmer is from July to March.

Fort of Ranthambhor, Sawai Madhopur

Ranthambhor fort is perched on the hill at an altitude of 1578 ft. above sea level. It is situated at 26° 04' north latitude and 76° 32' east longitude at Sawai Madhopur in eastern part of Rajasthan, bounded by Dausa and Karauli in the north, Dausa in the northwest, Jaipur and Tonk in the west, Karauli in the southeast and Bundi and Kota in the south. Ranthambhor is composed of two words *'Ran'* and *'Tham'*. *'Ran'* is name of a hill below the fort and *'Tham'* is the hill where the fort stands. Ranthambhor was also known by the name of Rantaipur in early times. The site is located on Delhi-Mumbai main railway line, 13 km from Sawai Madhopur railway station and 165 km from Jaipur which is also the nearest airport. Ranthambhor is famous for its national park and tiger reserve. The district has total area of 5043 sq. km fed by Banas river which merges into Chambal after traversing some distance.

Raja Jayant of Chauhan clan built this fort during 10th century AD on the advice of a hermit Padam who lived in the vicinity of the forest reserve. A narrow metalled road through the deep forest of Ranthambhor terminates at the mountain base wherefrom steep and wide stairway leads to the fortress for about a kilometer through arched gateways viz. Naulakha Darwaja, Hathi pole, Ganesh pole, Andheri pole, Suraj pole, and Tripoliya pole. The stairway is flanked by rampart on the

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right and the hill on the left. The strong rampart also comprises a part of the hill. The fort is masonry work of stone and lime mortar. The red sandstone is marginally used in Badal Mahal and on the gateways. The rampart has several slant gun points along with a view finder.

The hill fort covers an area of 12 sq. km looking below the far and wide expanse of Ranthambhor National Park, lake and ravines. Each gateway with nail-studded doors has upper storey meant for guards to mount vigil round the fort. The fort houses Hamir palace, Rani palace, Supari palace, Badal palace, Laxminarayan temple, Jain temple, Ganesh temple, Kankali temple, Shiv temple, Ranihad pond, Padam pond, court of Hamir, Chhattri of 32 pillars, Dargah of Peer Sadaruddin. Most of the mansions are in depleted condition. The fort complex houses several other palaces and havelis which are presently in ruins. Dargah of Peer Sadaruddin, Ganesh Mandir, Laxminarayan Mandir, Jain Mandir, Kankila Mandir are being maintained and visited by people regularly. Dargah is painted white from outside and crowned with a large dome, encircled by stone balustrade. A baori and well opposite the dargah amidst the ruins is a marshy area where the birds of various species flock on the site. The five water reservoirs in the fort catered the needs of a large population.

An arched gateway near the dargah leads to Badal Mahal (Cloud Palace). The two-storey Badal Mahal is masonry work of stone and lime mortar in rectangular shape representing Hindu architecture. The main room of the palace has two small cells on either side with low height doorways. The cells have arched niches. The stone walls are carved in simple floral pattern. The room is extended with pillared veranda facing the picturesque surrounding across the rampart. The floral arches of the veranda are supported on twin pillars in red sandstone with simple floral bases. The interior has fallen black. The ceiling is carved beautifully in floral motif along with niches at the border. Badal Mahal complex houses several small and big mansions of flat ceilings and alcoved walls, while some have square niches, mostly in ruins. The interior is void of any décor;

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instead the plaster is peeling off at places. The rooftop of Badal Mahal affords a panoramic view of tiger reserve, the lake with crocodiles on its bank and the Aravalli mountain range.

Chhatri of 32 pillars is an opened arched pavilion erected on a high square platform having arched recesses around it. The pavilion is entered through a flight of stairs adorned with small domed-kiosk each on four corners. It is topped by a large dome surrounded by eight small domes studded with spikes at the apex. A large Shiv Ling is installed in a small underground cell. The imposing monument is built of red sandstone and is in good condition.

Hamir Mahal is also built of stone and lime mortar. A ramp leads to the palace through an arched gateway topped by overhanging balconies resting on ornate brackets. The spacious palace is rectangular on plan. The façade is intact whereas the interior is broken at places and has fallen black. It is also void of any embellishment. A large number of Rajput women committed *jauhar* in this palace during invasion of Allauddin Khilji. A lush green lawn in front of the palace enhances the beauty of the edifice.

Jain temple is crowned with *kalash* above the *amalaka*. The *shikhar* of the temple is surrounded by small domes. Presently, a part of the *kalash* is missing. It is masonry work of stone and lime mortar with a little use of red sandstone. The arched entrance has decorative curving in relief in red sandstone. The courtyard has small chambers in the arcaded corridor resting on double row of pillars. The falling plaster has weakened the structure. The temple is visited by a large number of people round the year.

Ganesh temple is enshrined with the image of Lord Ganesh flanked by his consort Ridhi-Sidhi on either side. The temple is thronged with people on the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi during the month of August-September. The temple is always surrounded by *langurs* who prey on sweets and garlands brought by the visitors.

Laxminarayan temple is a small temple with a few chambers on either side of the courtyard. The temple is being

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maintained and visited by people regularly. Padam pond named after a hermit is surrounded by ruins of the monuments. A downhill passage leads to the ravine where Shiv temple is located in complete solitude amid the dense forest.

History

After the death of Prithviraj Chauhan, his eldest son Hariraj ascended the throne of Ajmer while the youngest Govindraj became the lord of Ranthambhor in 12th century who established the Chauhan dynasty of Ranthambhor. Govindraj was succeeded by Valhan, Prahladan, Veernarayan, Vaghbhat and Jait Singh. Ranthambhor was assaulted several times by Delhi Sultanate, Mughals and Mewar rulers. Iltumish attacked Ranthambhor fort in 1226 and defeated Govindraj. He also killed Veernarayan treacherously in Delhi. After the death of Iltumish, Vaghbhat, son of Veernarayan reorganized his army and overthrew the Muslim troops from Ranthambhor. Balban made a futile attempt to recapture it from Jait Singh in 1248. Jait Singh was succeeded by his son Hamir Dev in 1283. Sultan Jalaluddin Khilji of Delhi attacked Ranthambhor in 1292. Hamir Dev Chauhan fought valiantly and defeated Jalaluddin. Hamir Dev also defeated rulers of Chittaurgarh, Kathiawad and Pushkar and expanded the territory of his kingdom which touched the boundary of Shivpuri in Gwalior and Balwan in Kota.

Hamir Dev granted asylum to Sardar Muhammad Shah, a rebel general of Allauddin Khilji. Allauddin dispatched army under the command of Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan to subdue Ranthambhor in 1299. A fierce battle took place between the forces of Nusrat Khan and Hamir Dev in which Nusrat Khan was killed. Allauddin Khilji with an additional contingent marched towards Ranthambhor to assist his fighting army. Allauddin laid siege to the fort that lasted for about a year. The protracted siege had weakened the zest of defenders. The situation further worsened with shortage of provisions. The enemy troops found it difficult to scale the strong and high rampart of the fort, which was heavily guarded. The

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Muslim army constructed a tunnel to make a breach in the battlement but with little success. Rajputs defended the fort by all means. They kept the enemy forces at bay by throwing boiling oil and stones on them, which inflicted heavy causality on the enemy side. Allauddin allured Ratipal, a general and Ranpal, a commander in Hamir Dev's army to his side by promising them huge rewards. Ratipal relaxed the defences which made Muslim troops to enter into the fort. Hamir directed his soldiers to perform *kesaria* and *jauhar*. The royal ladies including queen and her daughter along with several Rajput women performed *jauhar*. Hamir Dev along with his soldiers performed *kesaria* by wearing yellow robes and fell blindly over the Muslim army and slayed whosoever came up on their swords. Ratimal and Ranpal along with their men fought from Muslim side. The rebel of Allauddin Sardar Muhammad Shah and his men fought from Rajput side. Hamir Dev put many to the sword before he fell to death. Allauddin got crushed Muhammad Shah under the elephant's foot. He also awarded death sentence to Ratipal and Ranpal on being disloyal to their master. On July 20, 1301, Allauddin Khilji entered into the fort and destroyed the temples. Ulagh Khan was appointed Subedar of the fort. Ranthambhor remained under the control of Allauddin Khilji until Khilji dynasty was dislodged by Tughlak dynasty.

Ranthambhor was captured by Rana Kumbha in 1460 and then by Khiljis of Malwa. Rana Sanga snatched it from Khiljis and annexed it to his territory in 1519. When Babar defeated Rana Sanga in the battle of Khanwa in 1527, Ranthambhor fell to Turks. In 1542 Shershah Suri captured it after defeating Mughal emperor Humayun and appointed his son, Adilkhan its commander. Thereafter, Rao Surjan Hada of Bundi occupied it. Akbar attacked Ranthambhor in 1569 with heavy cannons but its strong rampart withstood the cannon attack. Akbar built '*Sabat*', a covered passage, and threw heavy stones of iron and rock inside the fort through catapult pulled by hundred of oxen, causing heavy damages in the fortress. The battle lasted for a month when Akbar sent

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Raja Bhagwandas of Amber in the fort for negotiation which was accepted by Surjan Hada. After Mughals, Sawai Madho Singh of Jaipur captured it. The Rajput forces led by Sawai Madho Singh overthrew the Marathas from Ranthambhor. It remained under the Kachhawas till India got independence.

Small Forts of Dundhar

Fort of Chomu, Jaipur

The fort of Chomu, also called Chaumuhagarh, is situated in Chomu town of Jaipur district. It is 35 km from Jaipur on Sikar Road. It is a small ground-level fort with a moat around it. Rao Karan Singh had laid the foundation of Chaumuhagarh in 1595. His successor Raghunath Singh built the high rampart. The 7-15 ft. thick and 23 ft. high rampart consists of four bastions. Mohan Singh got built deep moat round the fort during his reign 1695-1743. The moat is 35 ft. deep and 80 ft. wide. The fort has four gateways namely Bajrang darwaja, Holi darwaja, Baori darwaja and Pihala darwaja.

Rao Krishan Singh constructed a wall round the Chomu town and installed cannon at Chomu fort. He also built rain fed canal and the market. The Ganesh temple in the fort was built in 1845. Verisal, lord of Samode, built a *chhatri* in the memory of Krishan Singh. He also built Laxman Niwas at Jaipur. Govind Singh opened the school at Chomu in 1867. Anand Kunwar, wife of Ranjit Singh built Raghunath temple at Chomu in 1797. A major part of the fort has been converted into a heritage hotel. Some of its structures are also in depleted condition. The palaces viz. Krishan Niwas, Ratan Niwas, Sheesh Mahal, Moti Mahal and Devi Niwas are embellished with murals in Dundhar style.

Raja Prithviraj of Amber had 18 sons but only three came to the throne of Amber and the rest were given jagirs. One of his sons, Gopal was given the jagir of Samode. Gopal's son Natha got Chomu in jagir whose descendents were called Nathawat of Chomu and Samode. They served the Kachhawa rulers of Amber through out their life. After his death in a

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battle at Kangra, his eldest son Sukh Singh became the chieftain of Chomu. He was succeeded by his son Raghunath Singh. He along with his troops accompanied Maharaja Bishan Singh of Amber in the campaign against Jats of Bharatpur in 1690. Raghunath Singh also accompanied Mirza Raja Sawai Jai Singh to Dholpur in crushing the revolt of Jats. His son, Mohan Singh won the battle of Taragarh and died in 1743. He was succeeded by his son, Jodh Singh who strengthened the defences of Ranthambhor fort under Amber rulers. Jodh Singh died in 1759. His son, Ratan Singh became the lord of Chomu. He founded Ratanpura village and built Ratan Niwas Baug and Ratan Niwas Mahal. He provided military help to Amber in the battle of Mandwa against Jat rebellion. Ratan Singh died in 1782 without son. His nephew Ranjit Singh, son of Rawal Sultan Singh of Samode was adopted as heir of Chomu. Maratha leader Mahadji Scindia launched an offensive on Jaipur to retrieve an outstanding amount from Sawai Pratap Singh. Pratap Singh refused to pay the amount which infuriated Maratha leader. Jaipur called for help from Jodhpur and Chomu. The joint army defeated Mahadji Scindia at Tunga near Dausa in 1787. Ranjit Singh and his men fought gallantly in this battle.

Chomu came into inheritance of Krishan Singh, son of Ranjit Singh. Raja Bahadur besieged the Chomu fort in 1812 but failed to make a breach in the defences. Krishan Singh defeated Jhala Jalim Singh of Kota who launched an offensive on Ranthambhor. Krishan Singh founded village Kishangarh after his name in 1813. He also constructed Krishanbehari temple in 1820. He died in 1832 without son. Laxman Singh, son of Verisal of Samode became an inheritor. After his death, Govind Singh became the chieftain of Chomu. He carried out several development works at Chomu. After his death in 1900, his nephew became the lord of Chomu.

Fort of Achrol, Jaipur

The fort of Achrol is situated on the hill along the Jaipur-Delhi highway at a distance of 35 km from Jaipur. Rao Achaldas

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of Balbhadrota branch of Kachhawas built this fort in 1564 AD. It is masonry work of red sandstone. An unmetalled steep winding track of about 3 km starts from the foothills and ends at the entrance of the fort. It is a small fort of four strong bastions on four corners. The chambers inside the fort are in depleted condition. Being located on a high summit, it unfolds a spectacular view of Aravalli ridges and the lush green fields. The fort is now a private property.

Fort of Madhorajpura, Jaipur

Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh-I founded a small town Madhorajpura and built a fort to commemorate his victory over Marathas. It is 70 km south of Jaipur. The fort is surrounded by 20 ft. wide and 30 ft. deep moat. The fort is accessed through three gateways. It houses palaces, well, food grain store houses, armoury, baradari, stables, soldiers' residence and temples. The fort is in ruins.

Sawai Jagat Singh awarded this fort as jagir to his queen who was daughter of Maharaja Man Singh of Jodhpur. Bharat Singh Naruka, a chieftain of Ladana and commander of this fort had imprisoned the family members of Amir Khan who had killed the Pokaran chief Sawai Singh treacherously. Amir Khan launched an attack on this fort in 1816 to free his family members. But he could not succeed and surrendered before the Maharaja.

Fort of Morija, Jaipur

The fort of Morija is situated on a hill in village Morija at a distance of 35 km from Jaipur. Its high and strong rampart has six bastions. The fort houses some rooms, water reservoirs and stable house. The fort was under the occupation of Nathawata branch of Kachhawas.

Fort of Kalakha, Jaipur

The fort of Kalakha is mounted on a hilltop on the Jaipur-Jobner road. Its strong rampart and bastions are visible at distance. A small hill near the fort is called as Nanhi Doongri.

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It was under the control of Kachhawa rulers of Amber. Jorawar Singh received it as jagir from Kachhawas.

Moti Dungri Palace, Jaipur

Moti Dungri, literally means Pearl Hill, is located at the heart of Jaipur city. The hill is crowned with a Palace known as Moti Dungri Palace. It is a small palace built in red sandstone and houses a temple dedicated to Lord Shiv. The temple is opened once in year on the occasion of Shiv Ratri. It was earlier known as Shankargarh on account of Shiv Temple. Maharaja Sawai Man Singh-II developed it into a palace by erecting turrets in Scottish style and named it Moti Dungri Palace. It was the royal residence of Rajmata Gayatri Devi and her son Jagat Singh. The palace is private property of royal family of Jaipur and it is not opened for public viewing. Birla Mandir is located majestically in white marble at the foothill of Moti Dungri. The temple is also called Lakshmi Narayan Mandir.

Jal Mahal, Jaipur

Jal Mahal (Water Palace) is situated majestically in the middle of Man Sagar Lake along the Jaipur-Delhi National Highway No.8. It is on the way to Amber Palace, surrounded by Aravalli hills, forts of Jaigarh, Nahargarh and Kanak Vrindavan Garden. It was built by Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh of Jaipur in 1799 AD for hunting birds and royal parties. The palace was also renovated by Maharaja Jai Singh-II. The 16th century lake was built by Sawai Man Singh-I by erecting a dam between the two hills and named it Man Sagar. The lake is spread over an area of 300 acres. A large number of migratory birds flock to the lake during winter.

Jal Mahal is five-storey building out of which four storeys are submerged in the water. It is built in red sandstone and represents Rajput-Mughal architecture. The palace is crowned with octagonal *chhatris* on four corners with rectangular arched balconies in between them. The balconies with curved roof are adorned with finials. The roof top is enclosed by perforated stone balustrade in white. The water logging in the palace led

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to seepage in the edifice which prompted the Government of Rajasthan to initiate restoration project under the name 'Ecological Restoration of Man Sagar Lake' and the Jal Mahal which progressed in different stages since 2001 through Jaipur Development Authority (JDA). The traditional method of plastering was used in renovating the palace using lime mortar, sand and colour derived from jaggery, *guggal* and *methi* (cumin). The edifice of Jal Mahal returned to its original pattern and is painted light yellow. Being located in the centre of the lake and uninhabited, the palace is not visited by the people and is adorned from the lake's shore.

The Man Sagar is rain-fed along with number of streams originating from the surrounding hills. The untreated city's sewage also flows into the lake. The depth of the lake varies from 5 ft. to 15 ft. The water treatment plant is erected on the lake which supplies drinking water to the city.

Samode Palace, Jaipur

Samode Palace is located at a distance of 42 kms from Jaipur. The palace reflects Mughal-Rajput art and architecture. The monument has been converted into a heritage hotel known as Samode Palace Hotel. It was built in 16th century as a fort and later developed as a palace by Rawal Berisal. The Sultan Mahal of Somode Palace is embellished with frescoes and murals of Rajasthani and Mughal art. The facades show Rajput architecture. Samode Palace belonged to Rawals of Samode who were appointed on higher posts in the Jaipur durbar. The Samode Bagh and the Samode Haveli were built later and are located near the palace. Samode Bagh is laid out in Mughal style with series of fountains and tents. The Samode fort is situated on the hill near the palace which is now in dilapidated condition.

Raj Mahal Palace, Jaipur

The Raj Palace was built by the Prime Minister Thakur Mohan Singh of Chomu in 1728. The palace was renovated and developed in its original charm in 1997. The palace is

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embellished with frescoes, mirror work, murals and stone carvings in Rajasthani art. The spacious lawn in the front of the palace enhances the beauty of the mansion. The rooms are centrally air-conditioned. The floral arches in the spacious rooms reminds one of the ancient time. The hotel has 38 suites decorated in different themes. It is the first centrally air-conditioned Heritage Hotel of the country equipped with an Elevator connecting all floors. It is 6 kms. from the railway station, Jaipur.

Rambagh Palace, Jaipur

Rambagh Palace is located at the heart of Jaipur city opposite to SMS Stadium. It has been the residence of the Maharaja of Jaipur. It is 5 kms from Jaipur railway station and 12 kms from Jaipur airport. The hotel has 94 double bed rooms, 2 single rooms and 10 suites. This heritage hotel is 5 star hotel with sprawling lawn. The façade is very impressing crowned with domed kiosks.

Jai Mahal Palace, Jaipur

The Jai Mahal Palace is located near the railway station at a distance of 3 kms. and 1 km from the main bus stand. It is about 260 years old monument representing Indo-Saracenic architecture. The palace has sprawling garden of 18 acres in Mughal style around it. The 5 star heritage palace hotel has 100 rooms and 6 suites designed and decorated elegantly.

Narain Niwas Palace, Jaipur

The Narain Niwas Palace is located in the erstwhile Kanota estate of Jaipur. It was built by the noble of Kanota. It is converted into heritage hotel and being run by the royal family. The façade is simple and beautiful in Rajput architecture with extensive courtyard and lawn around the mansion. The interior is decorated with frescoes and murals with original furnishings. The hotel has 28 rooms and suites which are quite large in size equipped with modern amenities. It is 5 kms from Jaipur railway station and 12 kms. from airport.

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Bissau Palace, Jaipur

The Bissau Palace was built in 1919 and converted to heritage hotel recently. It is 2 kms from Jaipur railway station and 15 kms from airport. The hotel has 40 rooms with all modern amenities. The rooms are decorated in traditional art and furnishings. The architecture of the palace is simple in style.

Raj Vilas Palace, Jaipur

Raj Vilas Palace was an old Haveli now converted into heritage hotel. It has total of 71 rooms including 3 villas with private swimming pools, 14 luxury air-conditioned tents and 54 deluxe rooms. The hotel is built in 30 acres of orchards, gardens and pools. The complex has a water body in which 250 years old temple floats. The interior is decorated in traditional Rajasthani art. It is located on the Gobner Road at about 8 kms from the main city and 17 kms from the airport.

Alsisar Haveli, Jaipur

The Alsisar Haveli is located near the railway station. The mansion was renovated in 1982 in Rajput art and architecture. Its spacious lobby opens into the courtyard. The rooms are decorated simply and elegantly in Rajasthani art. The hotel has 36 deluxe rooms and suites. It was built by the Thakurs of Alsisar estate of Jaipur. The façade is simple in construction.

Chirmi Palace, Jaipur

Chirmi Palace is a 165 years old building of Thakurs of Chomu under Jaipur state. It has now been converted into a hotel being run by Thakur Vikram Singh, descendant from Thakur Mohan Das who was responsible for the conquest of Afghanistan. The booty from this conquest was used for the construction of pink city. Thakur Vikram Singh has served a along career in the hotels like Taj Group of hotel, Rambagh Palace, Jaimahal Palace. The rooms are decorated simply in Rajasthani art. The façade is beautiful with arcaded corridor and latticed windows. Hotel Chirmi Palace is located at the heart of Jaipur city and is close to railway station at 1 km distance and 12 kms from airport.

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Diggi Palace, Jaipur

The Diggi Palace was built by Thakur Pratap Singh of Diggi family in 1881. The mansion reflects Rajput architecture. The Durbar Hall is decorated with frescoes and murals of Rajasthani art. The hotel has 37 rooms including suites, double and single bed rooms. The façade is simple and beautiful with water pool in front of it. It is about 1.5 kms from Jaipur railway station and 12 kms from airport.

Shahpura House, Jaipur

This 200 years old Shahpura House was built by Rao Hanuwant Singh. His successor, Rao Dhir Singh, expanded and converted it into a Heritage Hotel. The façade is beautiful with overhanging balconies on the right and left with the arched pavilion in the centre. The top is crowned with domed kiosks on four corners and a small open arched pavilion in the centre on the top. The restaurant is embellished with frescoes of Shekhawati art, arched windows and intricate wall pattern. The Durbar Hall is quite spacious and exquisitely decorated. The Sheesh Mahal is embellished brightly in different colours and murals and furnished with silver plated furniture. These rooms are spacious and decorated in different themes and colours with colonial furniture.

Man Mahal Pushkar, Ajmer

The Man Mahal Pushkar was built by Raja Man Singh-I of Jaipur as a royal guest house. He stayed here whenever he visited Pushkar. It is located in the east of Pushkar lake at a distance of about 35 kms from Ajmer. The palace reflects Rajput architecture and decorated in the same fashion. The palace has been converted into a heritage hotel and is being run by Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation. It also affords the view of number of temples around the holy lake Pushkar.

Pushkar Palace, Ajmer

Pushkar Palace was built by the Maharaja of Kishangarh about 400 years ago. It is situated on the edge of the lake and offers a panoramic view of temples, banks and the Aravalli

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hills. It has been converted into heritage hotel and has 30 deluxe rooms and 9 suites equipped with all modern amenities. The façade of the hotel is fabulous. The rooms are decorated with frescoes, portraits, old paintings and the colonial furniture.

Fort of Roopangarh, Kishangarh (Ajmer)

The Fort of Roopangarh was built by Maharaja Roop Singh of Kishangarh State in 1648. The nine turreted fort is located on the plains of Sambhar lake. The forts housed foundries, armouries, underground passages, jails and palaces. The interior is decorated with miniature paintings of Kishangarh school for which it is famous. Maharaja Brajraj Singh converted it into heritage hotel in 1997. The hotel has 15 double rooms, 4 single rooms and 1 queen's suite. It is 127 kms from Jaipur, 25 kms from Kishangarh railway station and 50 kms from Ajmer.

Tawangarh Fort, Karauli

Tawangarh fort is situated at an altitude of 1309 ft. above sea level at district headquarters Karauli. It was built by Raja Tawanpal, the eldest son of *Chandravanshi* Raja Vijaypal of Mathura in 1049. The fort occupies an area of 8 sq. km. Jagan pole and Suraj pole are the main entrances. The fort houses Khas Mahal, temples, wells, Bada chowk, palace of fort commander, Nanad Bhojai ka kuan, soldiers' quarters and cenotaphs. It is 23 km from Bayana town of Bharatpur.

Presently the fort is in ruins with several ancient Ashtadhatu and stone idols and sculptures buried under it. The looters and smugglers played havoc by plundering the fort with its expensive Ashthadhau idols and beautiful carved pillars adorned with sculptures. The interior of the temples, palaces and apartments in the fort complex once embellished with beautiful carvings and paintings are now broken and peeled off.

Raja Tawanpal annexed Alwar, Bharatpur and Dholpur to his kingdom. He died in 1090. He was succeeded by his son, Kunwarpal who conquered Bayana. Mohd. Ghauri attacked

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Tawangarh in 1196 which resulted into fierce battle between Muslim and Rajput forces. Kunwarpal along with his Rajput soldiers performed *kesaria* while the women performed *jauhar*. Kunwarpal died in the battle. Raja Arjunpal captured it from Muslims in 1327. He founded the city Kalyanpuri in 1348, the present Karauli. After Arjunpal, Vikramaditya ascended the throne of Karauli, followed by Abhaychand, Prithvipal, Udaichand, Rudrapratap, Chandsen, Gopaldas, Dwarikadas, Mukundas, Jagpal, Dharampal, Ratanpal, Kunwarpal-II, Gupal Singh, Tursanpal, Manakpal, Haribaksh, Pratappal, Narsinghpal, Bharatpal, Madanpal, Laxmanpal, Jaisinghpal, Arjunpal, Bhanwarpal, Bhumipal and Gameshpal, the last ruler of Karauli. Raja Gopaldas built a 4 km long wall in red sandstone consisting of several bastions round the city. Karauli came under the sway of Sikander Lodhi in 1516. Shershah Suri dislodged Lodhi dynasty at Delhi which also led to possession of Tawangarh to his side. Then, Mughal rulers occupied it. Marathas plundered Karauli and imposed tributes on its rulers. In 1817, Karauli entered into a treaty with British government which protected the state from Marathas.

City Palace, Karauli

The City Palace was built in the 14th century by the Royal family of Karauli. It remained the official residence of the Royals untill 1938 when the Bhanwar Vilas Palace was built by Maharaja Ganesh Pal Deo Bahadur, the then ruler of Karauli and the City Fort and Palace was abandoned by the family. The palace has impressive stone carvings, intricate latticework and frescoes. The property is now being managed by a Temple Trust. It is 170 kms from Jaipur.

Bhanwar Vilas Palace, Karauli

Bhanwar Vilas Palace was built by Maharaja Ganesh Pal Deo Bhadur of Karauli in 1938. The palace represents Colonial architecture. It is now heritage hotel offering 5 suites and 16 air-cooled rooms equipped with all modern amenities. It is 182 kms from Jaipur.

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Ramathra Fort, Karauli

Ramathra Fort is situated on a small hill surrounded by green valley in Sapotara tehsil of Karauli. The fort has strong rampart with bastions. The fort belonged to a noble of Karauli which was taken over by the Maharaja who used it as his hunting lodge. It is now heritage hotel which has 6 suites and 6 tents furnished with beautiful furniture. It is 40 kms from Karauli city and 180 kms from Jaipur. It affords a panaromic view of the town and a lake below.

Fort of Dausa

The fort of Dausa is situated on a high submit in the Aravalli range at an altitude of 1643 ft. above sea level in Dausa town. Dausa is named after the Devgiri hill. It is 55 km from Jaipur. The fort is located at 26° 51' north latitude and 76° 21' east longitude in the eastern part of Rajasthan. Badgujars had built the fort of Dausa which later expanded by Kachhawas. Dausa is bounded by Alwar in the north, Jaipur in the west, Sawai Madhopur in the south, Karauli in the southeast and Bharatpur in the northeast. Banganga and Sawa rivers flow through the district. The district's total area is 3404.78 sq. km.

The fort has two main entry gateways – Hathi pole and Mori pole. 13.6 ft. long cannon is mounted atop the fort facing the gateway. Two small cannons are also placed on each bastion. The fort houses a well named 'Rajaji ka Kuan', a big baori, a mosque, Jain temple, temples of Baijnath Mahadev, Ramchandra and Durgamata. The fort is in depleted condition. Neelkanth Mahadev temple is situated atop the hill.

Fort of Jhilai, Tonk

The fort of Jhilai is situated in Jhilai village in Niwai tehsil of Tonk district. The fort is emphatically perched on high hill dominating the surrounding landscape. It is 7 km from Niwai railway station and about 80 km from Jaipur. The fort was built by Naruka Rajput of Kachhawa branch. The fort is crowned with several domes and occupies a large area on the

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mountain. Its long and wide rampart consists of several solid bastions. The fort houses several buildings like palaces, temples, baoris, stables, store rooms, most of them in depleted condition. Its outer structure is in good condition. Jhilai village was also enclosed by a strong wall consisting of four gateways viz. Kairod darwaja, Niwai darwaja, Sindara darwaja, Devali darwaja.

Fort of Dooni, Tonk

The fort of Dooni is a small ground-level edifice surrounded by a moat. It is now deserted and in depleted condition. It is situated in Dooni village, 38 km from district headquarters. Dooni was *Thikana* of Jaipur state belonging to Gogawat branch of Kachhawas. Daulat Rao Scindia invaded the fort but he could not subdue it due to its strong rampart and defences.

Fort of Kakod, Sawai Madhopur

Kakod fort is situated on a steep hill in district Sawai Madhopur. It is 100 km from Jaipur and 22 km from Sawai Madhopur city.

Fort of Shahar, Sawai Madhopur

The fort of Shahar is perched on the hill in Sawai Madhopur district. The fort can be reached through a hilly track. It is built of red sandstone and has 16 bastions. The fort houses Zanana and Mardana Mahal, armoury, water tanks and temples. It is presently in depleted condition. The town derived its name Shahar on account of temple dedicated to goddess Sehara. It is 163 km from Jaipur.

Hotel Sawai Madhopur Lodge

Sawai Madhopur lodge was built by Maharaja Sawai Man Singh-II of Jaipur in 1930 as hunting lodge near the Ranthambore National Park. The lodge is laid over a spacious garden of about 12 acres. It is now a heritage hotel which has 22 standard rooms, 10 superior rooms, 2 executive suites and 6 tents. The rooms are well decorated and are quite modern in traditional architecture with modern facilities. The floral

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archway and the alcoves in the rooms are exquisitely carved and painted white. It is 2 kms from Sawai Madhopur railway station and 162 kms from Jaipur.

Khandar Fort, Sawai Madhopur

Khandar fort is situated atop a hill in Khandar tehsil at a distance of 40 kms from Sawai Madhopur railway station. The fort is accessible through three entry gates. The fort houses Chaturbhuja temple, Govind Devji temple, Jagatpalji temple, Rani temple, Jayanti Mata temple and Jain temple. The Jain temple is decorated with carved idols of Jain divinities in rock stone. The Hanuman temple is enshrined with an idol of Lord Hanuman putting his feet on the demon. Chaturbhuja temple is enshrined with an image of four-armed god. The fort also houses Hawa Mahal, Rani Mahal, mosque and two huge water tanks viz. Ramkund and Laxmankund besides seven small ponds. The most powerful cannon Sharada made of seven metals made this fort an invincible. The fort was built by Bargujar rulers and later ruled by Sisodiya dynasty of Mewar. It was attacked by Allauddin Khilji. It also remained under the control of Mughal rulers.

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Mewat Region

Lohagarh Fort, Bharatpur

Lohagarh fort is situated at the heart of Bharatpur city at 27°50' north latitude and 78°17' east longitude in the eastern part of Rajasthan. Bharatpur is situated at an altitude of 250 metres above sea level and is bounded by Gurgaon district of Haryana in the north, Mathura and Agra of Uttar Pradesh in the east, Dholpur in the south, Sawai Madhopur and Alwar in the west. Nuh, 6 km from Bharatpur, is an important archaeological site where the pottery and objects of terracotta and iron were discovered in the mounds of ancient settlements. Bharatpur was founded after Bharat, son of Raja Dashrath of Ayodhya. The district has total area of 5066 sq. km with rich flora and fauna surviving on couple of lakes. Bharatpur is connected with rail and road network with several cities within and outside the state. It is 180 km from Delhi, 176 km from Jaipur and 54 km from Agra which is also the nearest airport.

Raja Surajmal captured a small fort from Khemkaran, a Jat of Sogaria clan in 1733 and built a massive fort in its place which came to be known as Lohagarh due to its strong construction. The fort was constructed in 8 years time in 1741. The ground-level Lohagarh fort is surrounded by moat 18.3 m wide and 7 m deep. The sand extracted from the moat was used in constructing a wall 25 ft. high and 30 ft. thick around the Bharatpur city with 10 huge gateways – Mathura pole, Veernarayan pole, Atalband pole, Neem pole, Anaha pole, Kumher pole, Chand pole, Goverdhan pole, Jaghina pole and Suraj pole. The periphery wall was also enclosed by 25 ft. wide and 20 ft. deep moat. The moat was filled with water drawn from Moti lake through Sujanganga canal. The fort occupies an area of 6.4 sq. km. The two huge arched entrances of the

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fort in the north and south are flanked by bastions on either side. The two bridges over the water-filled moat give access to the arched gateways. The northern gateway has Ashtadhatu while the southern gateway has Lohhiya Darwaja. The Ashtadhatu Darwaja was brought by Maharaja Jawahar Singh from Red Fort after looting the royal treasury in 1765. It is also believed that this Darwaja was originally installed at Chittaurgarh fort wherefrom Allauddin Khilji brought it to Delhi. Surajmal strengthened the defences of the fort by installing several cannons. One of the cannons was required 40 pairs of oxen to pull it. The cannon was strong enough to throw a heavy cannon ball of 48 pounds. Surajmal also constructed forts at Kumher, Weir and Aligarh.

The fort has two ramparts - inner and outer, made of stone and mud respectively, consisting of eight huge and forty small bastions. Presently, the mud wall is almost extinct from the site. The eight huge bastions of Lohagarh are - Jawahar Singh Burj (named after Raja Jawahar Singh,), Fateh Burj (built in 1806 to commemorate the victory of Jats over British), Bhainsawali Burj (named after Buffalo), Sinsini Burj (named after cannon Sinsini, also known as Jeth Malwali Burj), Gokulrama Burj (named after Risaldar Gokulrama), Kalika Burj (named after goddess Kali), Naval Singh Burj (named after Nawal Singh) and Bagarwali Burj. A sizeable population lives within the fortified walls in concrete houses confining in themselves the ruins of the monument. The fort complex houses three palaces - Kishori Mahal, Mahal Khas and Kothi Khas, besides, Durbar hall, temples of Bihariji, Mohanji, Gangaji and Laxmiji. The other mansions in the fort are in ruins. Ganga Mandir of 19th century is embellished with carved arabesques on its stone pillars, walls and mehrabs.

Kaccheri Kalan is situated in the Kamra Khas of Durbar hall. It was the venue for general meetings held by the rulers. The royal ladies used to watch the proceedings in the hall through perforated balconies on the upper storey. Durbar hall was built by Maharaja Surajmal in the early half of 18thcentury. A historic meeting under the chairmanship of Sardar Vallabh

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Bhai Patel was held in Durbar hall in 1948 in which the formation of Matsya Pradesh comprising the four states of Rajputana namely Dholpur, Bharatpur, Karauli and Alwar was decided. The lush green lawn in front of durbar hall is laid out in geometric pattern dotted with series of fountains. The five arched openings in the hall give access to inner chambers. The flat roof is topped by an open balcony with curved roof adorned with golden finials. The pink sandstone walls have simple floral designs in relief pattern. The back wall of the central hall is carved with alcoved balconies. The first storey has a few chambers with balconies looking below the central hall. An open arched pavilion on the rooftop of durbal hall is fantastic structure which unfolds a panoramic view of the town along with the ruins of fort buildings strewn all around.

The stone sculptures dating back to 9th century AD onwards have been displayed in the corridor at ground floor. The sculptures includes the bust of a lady, heads of Shiv, Vishnu, Ganesh, Budha and Kuber, bust of Shiv-Parvati of post Gupta period, Bodhisatva of Kushan period, Navgreh, stone inscriptions etc. These sculptures were discovered from various sites of Mewat region.

Persian *Hammam*, an attractive edifice of the durbar hall, has several small chambers having domical ceiling with a lotus in the centre. The interior is decorated in floral motif. The chambers are inter-connected with arched passages. The small niches have painted border around them. The marble floor is laid out in floral and geometric pattern. The bath tubs are connected with water canals.

Sawai Brijendra Singh opened a museum on the upper storey of Durbal hall in 1944. The museum has collection of armoury, marble and copper items and antiques of the royalty. The armoury section displays the armours of the Jat rulers and their troops which includes long barrel guns, daggers, swords, pistols, spheres, steel body armour of 19th century. A pair of miniature cannon of 18th century once fired by Maharaja Jawahar Singh in Jaipur while returning from Pushkar is also displayed. The antique gallery houses marble pots, knives made

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of iron, copper and stone. The copper pitchers, wooden objects of Bharatpur art, ceramic and bone china items, hand fans made from ivory and sandalwood, water pots in floral design of 20th century in gold are striking. The sculptured images and inscriptions in red sandstone dating back to 9th to 12th century have been put on the show in the gallery. One of the rooms of high flat ceiling is moderately decorated with old royal furniture.

Jawahar Burj was built by Maharaja Surajmal. It affords a spectacular view of Bharatpur town from the Burj. A two-storey open arched pavilion on the Burj is surrounded by three small pavilions. These pavilions were built by Jawarhar Singh (1763-68). Maharaja Brajendra Singh erected an iron pillar on the Burj engraved with the names of Jat rulers.

The palaces represent Mughal-Rajput architecture. Kishori Mahal, Mahal Khas, Mori Mahal and Kothi Khas are exquisitely decorated. The marble floorings, stone latticed windows and beautiful murals are features of these palaces. The three-storeyed Mahal Khas has been converted into a heritage hotel which has eight deluxe rooms and 4 deluxe suites, equipped with modern amenities. The courtyard is flanked by three arched galleries of Mahal Khas. The façade is in original state adorned with arched balconies having curved roof. The interior is embellished with murals in floral designs in lustrous gold.

Maharaja Balwant Singh Palace embodies modern architec-ture. Kishori Mahal has been converted into a memorial dedicated to Maharaja Surajmal. A sculpture of Surajmal on the horseback is erected in front of the Mahal surrounded by stone inscriptions in Hindi which records important historical events of Bharatpur. The memorial was inaugurated by Vasundhra Raje, the Chief Minister of Rajasthan on December 5, 2008.

History

After the split of Maurya empire, small principalities came into being ruled by different foreign dynasties. The coins

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discovered in Mewat region were minted during Maurya, Kushana, Saka and Huna dynasties indicating that the region was under the sway of foreign rulers. Pratihar rulers were displaced from Bharatpur by Ajayraj Chauhan of Ajmer during 12th century AD. The Chauhan's large empire in northern India with twin capitals at Ajmer and Delhi collapsed after the defeat of Prithviraj Chauhan by Mohd. Ghauri in 1192. Ghauri returned to Gajni after handing over the state of affairs of Delhi to his slave Qutubdin Aibak. He was succeeded by Iltumish who also took control of Bayana. The accession of Lodhis on the throne of Delhi brought Mewat under their control. Babar captured Delhi from Ibrahim Lodhi and subsequently defeated Rana Sanga in the battle of Khanwa in 1527 at Rupbas tehsil of Bharatpur. Bharatpur came under the control of Shershah Suri for a short period until taken back by Mughals. During this time, Jats of Bharatpur revolted against the Mughal dominion. The Mughal emperor Shahjahan assigned Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber to put down the Jat revolt. The Jats with the support of Gurjars and Meenas fought relentlessly against Mughal army. Many Jat rebels were killed and their leader Gokula was detained. Aurangzeb forced Gokula to embrace Islam but in vain. Consequently, he along with his uncle Udai Singh was slashed to death in Agra.

Rajaram, a Jat chieftain, grew into power and plundered Agra fort heavily in 1688. He desecrated the grave of Akbar. Aurangzeb sent a detachment to Agra under the command of his grandson, Bedar Bakht. But the Mughal army failed to overpower Rajaram. Then, Raja Bishan Singh of Amber was sent to Agra to repel the Jats invasion. Bishan Singh killed Rajaram in the battle and his head was sent to Aurangzeb.

After Rajaram, Churaman continued the fight against Mughals. Raja Bishan Singh launched an attack on Churaman at Sinsini fort in 1690. A fierce battle took place between Jats and the combined army of Rajputs and Mughals. Churaman and his son Fateh Singh fled from the fort and the fort fell into the hands of allied army. Churaman snatched it back from Mughals in 1704 but later reoccupied by Mughals in 1705.

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After the death of Aurangzeb, a war of succession broke out between his sons Bahadurshah and Azamshah. When Bahadurshah succeeded as emperor, Churaman entered into friendly terms with Mughals. However, Churaman played havoc with his plundering activities. Emperor Farrukhsiyar sent an expedition under Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur against Churaman in 1716. Maharao Bhim Singh of Kota, Maharao Budh Singh of Bundi and Raja Gaj Singh Narwari accompanied Raja Jai Singh along with their contingent consisting of large cavalry and heavy artillery. The allied army surrounded the Thun fort defended by Churaman and his strong troops. Thun was mud fort built by Churaman and was surrounded by dense forest. The allied army cut down the forest to approach the fort. Jat rebels put stiff resistance against the allied army. However, the situation culminated into a peace treaty. The emperor imposed tribute on Churaman. Churaman was pardoned and joined the Mughal services.

After the death of Churaman, his eldest son Mokham Singh succeeded as next chieftain. Mokham Singh was following the footsteps of his father which annoyed the Mughal emperor. The emperor dispatched army under the command of Maharaja Jai Singh to subdue the Thun fort in 1722. Badan Singh, a Jat leader, was won over by Mughals who led the Mughal army through forest to besiege the fort. Mokham Singh fled away from the fort seeing the large Mughal army. Badan Singh seated on the throne of Bharatpur and bestowed upon the title of Raja. Badan Singh was different from his predecessors as an efficient ruler. He built fort and various buildings. After the death of Badan Singh in 1756, his eldest son Surajmal seated on the throne of Bharatpur.

Afghan king Ahmed Shah Abdali advanced towards Delhi in 1756 after conquering Peshawar and Punjab. Abdali attacked Bharatpur in 1757 and defeated Jawahar Singh, son of Raja Surajmal with heavy causalities. He ravaged and plundered Mathura, Deeg, Ballabgarh and Agra. A large number of people were killed, women were raped. The temples

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of Mathura were destroyed. The outbreak of cholera had taken many Afghan lives which made Abdali to return to Afghanistan with a huge booty. He imposed tribute on Raja Surajmal but it was never given.

Abdali had killed Maratha leader Dattaji Scindia. Marathas allied with Raja Surajmal for the conquest against Abdali. The joint army of Marathas and Jats reached Delhi. However, Surajmal returned to Bharatpur due to differences with Maratha leader. Marathas were defeated by Abdali at Panipat in 1761. Afghan soldiers slew a large number of Maratha soldiers and those who could survive fled from the battlefield and reached Bharatpur. Raja Surajmal granted them shelter. When Abdali left India, Raja Surajmal took control of many places including Agra, Aligarh, Ballabhgarh, Farrukhnagar, Rewari and annexed them to Mewat in 1761. Raja Surajmal was killed by Afghan soldiers on the bank of Hindon river on December 25, 1763. He was cremated at Goverdhan and his *chhatri* erected. Raja Surajmal constructed various buildings, palaces, gardens and water reservoirs for which the marble and red sandstone were brought from Bansi Paharpur and Beratha to Bharatpur, Kumher, Weir and Deeg. About 1000 carts, 1500 camel carts, 200 horse carts and 500 donkeys were employed for transporting the building materials. His son Jawahar Singh seated on the throne of Bharatpur. He died in 1768. His younger brother Ratan Singh came to the throne. After him, his minor son Kehari Singh ascended the throne. Kehari Singh died early and Ranjit Singh inherited the throne.

In 1803, Jats entered into peace treaty with British government. When Britishers asked for military help from Maharaja Ranjit Singh against Marathas, he turned down their request and took side of Marathas instead. As a consequence, British army led by Lord Lake attacked Bharatpur fort in 1805 where the Maratha leader Malhar Rao Holkar was taking shelter. A coalition of Marathas and Jats defeated British army and killed many of its soldiers. The British army shot cannons that got buried in the thick mud rampart of the fort. A deep

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and wide moat round the fort was Herculean task for British army to get to the fortified area. Lastly, a peace treaty was signed between British government and Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Bharatpur on April 18, 1805.

After the death of Ranjit Singh, his son Randhir Singh came to the throne and reigned till 1823. His younger brother Baldev Singh ruled for a short period. Durjansal, grandson of Ranjit Singh ascended the throne. He was not in good terms with British government. British army commanded by General Lord Combermer attacked Bharatpur fort with heavy cannons in 1825. They laid mines to blast the rampart. The cannons and mines blew off the rampart in which many British soldiers died under the falling masonry. Britishers captured the fort and arrested Durjansal along with his family. Balwant Singh was enthroned as Maharaja of Bharatpur under British government. Balwant Singh died in 1853. His son Jaswant Singh was minor. The political power was exercised by the British political agent until Jaswant Singh could rule independently. Jaswant Singh died in 1893, his son Ram Singh inherited the throne. But the British government installed Kishan Singh in his place in 1900. Kishan Singh died in 1929. His son Brajender Singh ascended the throne at the age of 14. British Political agent was appointed to look after the state affairs. Bharatpur became a part of Matsya Union that merged into India in 1949.

Tourist attractions around Bharatpur

Jama Masjid, Company Park, Golbag Ganga, Mata temple, Laxmiji temple and Gandhi Park are places of tourist attractions at Bharatpur. **Deeg** is 34 km from Bharatpur which is known for its palaces amid the water reservoir. **Bayana** is 45 km where Vijaygarh fort is situated. **Kama** situated at a short distance where Lord Krishan spend his early life. **Keoladeo National Park** at Bharatpur is the home of more than 350 species of birds of which one third of population is migratory from Siberia and Central Asia during winter. Its lake occupies an area of 29 sq. km.

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Deeg Palace, Bharatpur

Raja Badan Singh built the Deeg palace, now known as Purana Mahal (old palace) on the bank of Roop Sagar under the supervision of his able minister Jeevan Ram Banwari. He shifted the capital to Deeg from Bharatpur on the advice of a saint Pritam Das. It presently houses the offices of State government. The three-storey old palace is crowned with cluster of curved roofs and domed kiosks topped by finials. It is rectangular on plan containing two separate courts flanked by compartments, vestibules and chambers. The palace is accessed through three gateways - Singh pole, Nanga pole and Suraj pole. Nanga pole and Suraj pole were erected by Maharaja Balwant Singh (1826-53). The interior is embellished with murals representing Mughal and Rajput art, depicting scenes from the life of Lord Krishan, secular images, animals and birds. Sheesh Mahal near the palace was built by Naval Singh, son of Raja Surajmal. It is now in ruins. Its hind part crowned with *chhatris* is in original state. The *hammam* (Tukish bath) of the palace was once embellished with enormous glass work which gave the mansion its name Sheesh Mahal.

Surajmal erected strong citadel with towering walls and bastions. The mansions built in the palace complex are known as Bhawans and are surrounded by two large water reservoirs - Roop Sagar and Gopal Sagar on the east and west respectively. The Bhawans are masonry work of light pink sandstone, bricks, stone, rubble and mortar. The red sandstone and white marble have also been used in a few buildings. The pink sandstone and rubble were brought from the quarries of Bansi and Paharpur in district Bharatpur.

The projecting dripstone, pillars with floral bases and tapering shafts surmounted by carved flower petals are quite conspicuous. The arches on ornate pillars have been carved exquisitely. The arches are in semi-circular, trefoil and pointed apses. The ceilings are flat in rectangular shape. The pillars, lower vertical edge of the brackets, fringe of the arches, fountains and towering ridge of Bengal roofs are embellished with motif of leaves and flowers. The false niches, decorative

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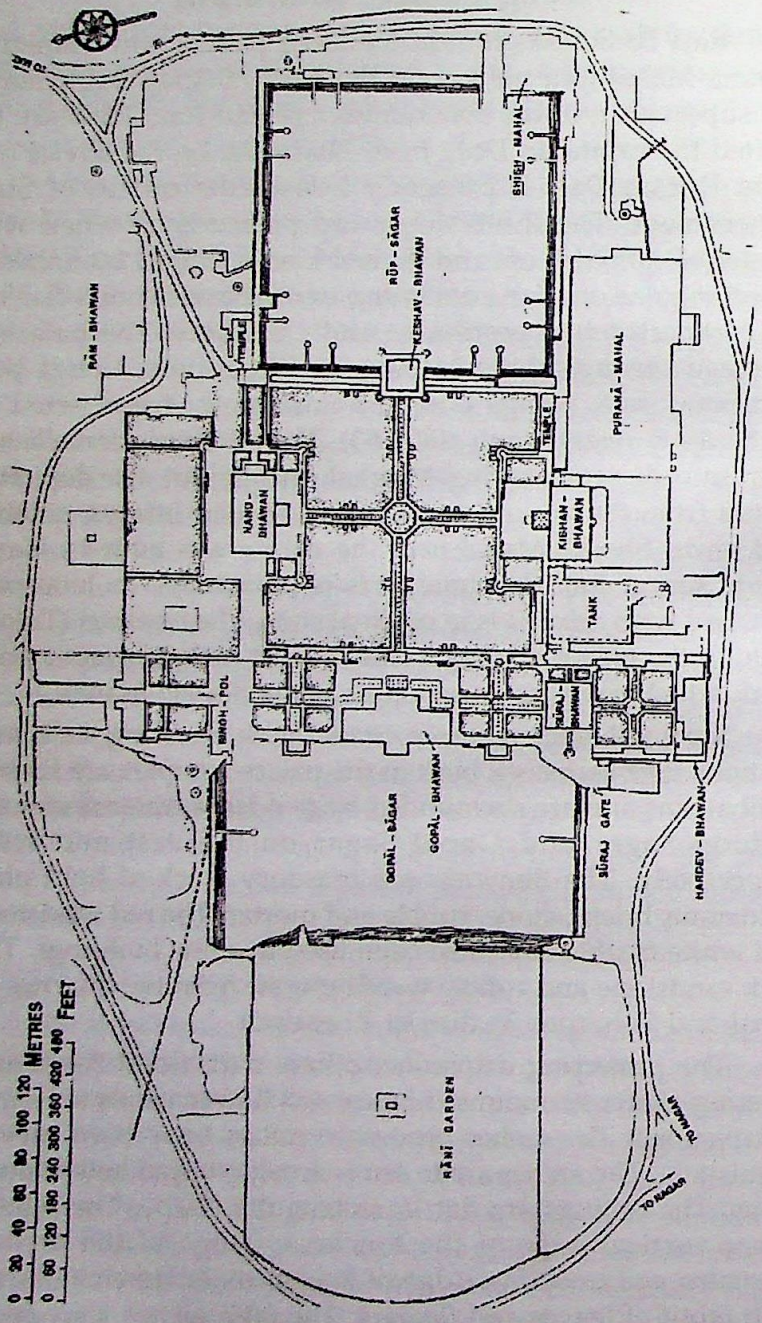

Deeg Palace (Site Plan)

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squares and oblongs are in full or partial foliations. The gardens are laid out in Mughal style in four-fold garden pattern. The pathways are laid out in red sandstone. The striking characteristics of these palaces are balanced outlines, fine proportions, commodious halls, attractive and logically disposed arcades, alluring greenery, charming tanks and canals with fountains. The ornamentation consists mainly of sculpture done in low relief in floral pattern of conventional type. The inlay work on marble is limited. About five hundred fountains were run on natural water pressure without using any electrical or mechanical devices. The fountains have sculptured floricomous body almost copying the pattern of the pillars existing there. In some cases there are arrangements for breaking the current of water into several smaller ones by means of basin with perforated bottom attached to a pipeline, thus, producing quite fanciful fountains inside the building.

Roop Sagar also known as *Pakka Talab* was built by Roop Singh, brother of Badan Singh. It occupies an area of 82 sq.m. having depth of 6 m with several bathing *ghats*. Raja Surajmal built Gopal Sagar also called *Kachcha Talab* due to its earlier earthen embankments. It too has many *ghats*. Surajmal built Suraj Bhawan, Hardev Bhawan, Gopal Bhawan and Gopal Sagar. The unfinished work of his father was completed by his son Jawahar Singh.

Gopal Bhawan is the largest oblong building (62.18 m. x 18.90 m.) flanked by *Savan* (months of July-August) and *Bhadon* (months of August-September) pavilions on the north and south respectively. The hut-shaped roofs of the flanking pavilions of two storeys are surmounted by a row of elegant spikes. Its upper storey forms a hall (10.97 m. x 7 m.) enclosed by arcades on all sides. The lower storey consists of a hall with a gallery at the back and verandas separated by piers showing arches on three sides. In the middle of back wall of the gallery is a wide carved chute, for the charming flow of water, which is connected by a hidden drain with a shallow oblong cistern in the hall and a flattish water-sprinkling basin in the centre. On the outer side of the hall, above the spandrels of the arches, copper pipes are

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fitted, so that the water falling through them, in the form of a semi-circle on the veranda, may stage the beautiful scene of the rainy season. The facades of the veranda are embellished with embowed openings having finely-carved latticed rails. At the base of the structure, the brackets, supporting the veranda and particularly the long struts of the corners, impart to it the shape of a keel which lends the whole composition the look of a large floating boat with a cabin at the top.

The Gopal Bhawan attains a height of 9.75 m. above the ground with flat roof. The rooms in the building are well ventilated. The Bhawan looks two storeys from the garden side and four storeys from the Gopal Sagar where two basement storeys secured by stone balustrade were constructed for cool shelter during summer and fishing purposes. The overhanging balconies on the water side give an impression of a floating boat. The central hall (23.16 m. x 16.76 m.) consists of beautiful arches and chiseled pillars with floral bases. The back wall has series of alcoves. A small marble water pool, rectangular on plan, adds elegance to the interior. The upper storey of the hall has arcaded balcony. There is a small oblong chamber opposite the hall enclosed by arcades on three sides, housing carved stone basins with fountains. There are several alleys and apartments between the two halls. The façade is beautified with a row of fountains flanked by two canals with jets. Once the roof-terrace was surmounted by a *chhatri* with hipped roof flattened at the ridge. The Bhawan houses a low-height black marble throne of Shahjahan which was brought by Raja Jawahar Singh from Delhi in 1764.

A terrace in front of Gopal Bhawan rests on narrow and small arches. An arch of white marble called swing (*hindola)* is installed on a pedestal of the same material on the terrace. The arch is adorned with tiny and solid domes topped by finials. Its marble pedestal adorned with *pietra dura* records inscription in Persian dated 1630 AD.

Suraj Bhawan is single storey in 26.80 sq. m. built of white marble and sandstone. Its 6.70 m. high flat roof is enclosed by stone balustrade. The roof, eaves, brackets and plinth area are

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in sandstone whereas the rest of the building is in white marble. Some of the marble slabs belong to the royal Mughal buildings which probably brought by Jawahar Singh as the same vary in size and texture. Later, fine lime plaster was also applied in the edifice as substitute of marble. Suraj Bhawan consists of a veranda with five arched openings on each side and rooms at the corners which have domical ceilings with a single carved lotus in the centre. The rooms are decorated in Mughal style. Each floor of the veranda has central tank with jets. The floor behind the veranda which is raised by 0.91 m. has a chamber in the centre, encompassed by four low cells and their connecting corridors. The dado of the central chamber is embellished with *pietra dura* work. The marble floors of the corridors and cells are similarly decorated. Besides, several slabs bear *pietra dura* work. The main room of the building is lighted through windows and recesses of the corridors. The curved ceiling of the corridor is supported on semi-circular arches. The building was meant for ladies as a place of rest and recreation.

Hardev Bhawan is situated behind Suraj Bhawan in a quadrangle set up with inner garden. It is two-storey on the south with a vast garden in front of it in *charbagh* pattern. The central hall on the lower floor is bounded by arched cloister on three sides supported on a row of double pillars adorned with floral bases. At the back of the hall is an oblong corridor with a raised floor and domed cells at each end. A rectangular chamber with a veranda flanked by cells has been built on either hand of the hall. A ramp from eastern storey leads to upper storey, which has a railed central terrace and two pillared *dalans* to its right and left. The hind part of the terrace is crowned with curved roof surmounted by spikes and flanked by small domes on either side. A narrow gallery, screened with obliquely-cut *jails* runs at the back ofthe upper floor. The other two sides of the quadrangle have ordinary rooms flanking a central veranda, which is in two floors on the east. The Bhawan was meant for royal ladies.

Kishan Bhawan consists of a large hall (19.20 m. x 16.45 m.) with five central archways embellished with carved arabesques. The back wall in the hall is adorned with an alcoved

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balcony with curved roof and carved front. Its false curved roof is embellished with foliage motif. Along each shorter sides of the hall are two rooms. A long corridor at the back with raised floor leads to a small cell with a half-decagonal plan, projecting from the southern wall. The sculptured peacocks and tender flower plants also embellish some of the structural accessories of the hall. The southern part of the flat roof of Kishan Bhawan is crowned with an arcaded pavilion. The tank with thirteen fountains on the terrace imparts elegance to the edifice.

Keshav Bhawan or *Baradari* is an open square pavilion overlooking the Roop Sagar and Deeg fort on the one hand and the garden on the other. This single storey Bhawan stands on a platform with moderate height. It is composed of double row of five arches supported on carved pillars on all sides forming an inner square platform, which is separated from outer one by means of a 0.91 m. wide canal. The canal has tiny jets on its both edges and a boulder row of larger fountains in the middle. Similarly, the edifice has double roof too which was used for creating an artificial thunder of clouds. This device was operated with the pressure of water passing to the lower roof through certain hollow pillars of the structure with considerable force and thereby rotating some heavy lithic balls kept on it thus, creating the sound of thunder. It was followed by an artificial rain by releasing water from the roof through pipes above the arches.

Nand Bhawan stands on a terrace that comprises a spacious oblong hall enclosed by seven arcaded openings and narrow walled wings on the long and shorter sides respectively. A central arcade divides the hall into inner and outer section. The interconnecting chambers are adorned with alcoved balconies, three of which facing the hall are in marble inlaid with semi-precious stones. The floor of the hall is decorated with sunken marble basins. The ceiling of the central hall rests on iron girders since 1867 which was earlier supported on timber beams. The piers in the hall are embellished with paintings in Mughal style.

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A large water tank is erected on strong aches at an elevation equal to the height of Kishan Bhawan. The tank is measured by 40.85 m in length and 31.70 m in breadth with a depth of 2 m. The height of water tank generates water pressure to run the fountains, chutes and cascades within the building and the gardens. The numerous holes in the tank walls supplied water to fountains in different parts of the complex. The tank was filled with water drawn from the nearby wells through Persian wheel system. The water tank can run the fountains for a few hours. The fountains are operated twice a year on conventional system.

Deeg Fort

Deeg fort was built by Raja Badan Singh in the Deeg town of Bharatpur district. The castle was further expanded by his son Surajmal during 1755-1765. Its 20 m high wall is made of rubble and mud, consisting of 12 imposing bastions. The largest is the Lakha burj on the northwest side. It is ground level fort in red sandstone and square on plan. The fort is accessible through a bridge over the water-filled moat. The pointed-arch gateway leads to a spacious court flanked by compartments. The fort has some underground chambers, tomb of Muhammad Shafi and *chhatri* of Sultan Singh, brother of Surajmal. The town was also enclosed by a strong wall with huge bastions surrounded by moat. The wall consisted of ten gateways viz. Au, Bhura, Panhori, Shahpura, Bandha, Kama, Delhi, Jasondi, Goverdhan and Ramachela. The buildings inside the fort are in rubble except one or two which were reconstructed in original pattern and are occupied by the offices of Panchayat Smiti etc. However, its strong rampart and bastions stand erected. The people live in a few houses in the fort complex. Ahmed Shah Abdali had laid siege to the fort on February 6, 1760 which continued for about four months. Abdali sent peace proposal to Surajmal which failed to be materialized. The fort is 153 km from Delhi, 98 km from Agra and 34 km from Bharatpur.

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Fort of Alwar

Fort of Alwar is perched on the high summit at an altitude of 304 m above Alwar city and 595 m above sea level in the northeast part of Rajasthan at 27°32' north latitude and 76°35' east longitude. The fort is 10 km from the city comprising 6 km well metalled hill track along the ravine unfolding a panoramic view of the city surrounded by Aravalli ridges. Alwar region has been referred as Matysa Pradesh in the epics. According to Matsya Puran, Lord Vishnu incarnated as Fish God (Matsya Avtar) to get back the *Vedas* (Holy Scriptures) from the demons who had taken them to the earth bed. The Fish God retrieved the *Vedas* from demons and kept them at the place which came to be known as Matsya Pradesh or Matsyapuri. Legend has it that Alwar region was abound in fish which gave it the name Matsya Pradesh i.e. the region of fish, as a large number of fishing equipment were excavated in the region. The rulers also incorporated the image of fish in their royal insignia. Alwar is administrative headquarters of Alwar district occupying an area of 8,380 sq. km with rich flora and fauna. It is bounded by Gurgaon in the north, Jaipur in the southwest, Dausa in the south and Bharatpur in the east. Alwar is 160 km from Delhi and 150 km from Jaipur.

Alwar fort also known as Bala Quila, is 5 km in length from north to south and 1.6 km in breadth from east to west. Its long rampart snakes over the ridges forming the strong fortification. The rampart is crowned with 3359 *Kanguras* having two slits on each. The rampart has 15 huge and 52 small towers constructed at strategic locations with 446 openings for musketry along with 8 huge towers encompassing it. The watch towers also appear on scattered hillocks around the fort and palaces. The fort has six gateways - Jai pole, Suraj pole, Laxman pole, Chand pole, Kishan pole and Andheri pole. Mughal emperors Babar, Humayun and Jahangir had stayed in this fort. Matsya Heritage and Environment Trust was formed on March 27, 1995 to undertake an extensive renovation work of the fort which is still in progress.

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The fort houses Jai Mahal, Nimkumbh Mahal, Surajkund, Salim Sagar, temples etc. Emperor Salim Shah had constructed a pond Salim Sagar. Maharaja Surajmal had constructed a water reservoir Surajkund. Sitaramji temple was constructed by Maharaja Pratap Singh in 1832. The facade resembles the architectural features of Nahargarh fort of Jaipur. The small palaces in the fort complex represent Indo-Islamic architecture. The walls are moderately decorated. The colourful ceiling in foliage scroll is falling dull.

The courtyard is flanked by two-storey floral arch of the palaces secured by newly erected red sandstone balustrades in front. A low gradient ramp leads to first storey which opens onto to a court surrounded by latticed windows and balconies crowned with curved roof on three sides. The domical ceilings are painted in flower and leaf scroll in gold, red, blue, green and grey colours. The niches on the fine white plaster walls are decorated in geometric pattern. The pillars in white marble are artistically chiseled and carved in floral motif. The interior of Jai Mahal and Nimkumbh Mahal is embellished with sparkling colours. The back walls too have balconies and windows overlooking the deep ravine with cluster of houses. It is the second good edifice after Sajjangarh palace of Udaipur which affords a location of perfect summer hill resort. One can feel the thrust of cool breeze in the summer.

The courtyard of second storey is enclosed by perforated parapet amid the fabulous white marble balcony. Its vaulted roof has semi circle domes studded with spikes. The interior is very sparsely decorated.

City Palace, Alwar

Bakhtawar Singh built the City Palace in 1793 which was expanded by subsequent rulers. The facade is impressive representing Mughal-Rajput architecture. The ground level five-storeyed City Palace has a museum on the top storey since 1940 while the rest of the building is occupied by the offices of Distt. Collectorate. The museum is divided into three galleries viz. Antique gallery, Armoury gallery and Painting gallery.

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The antique gallery displays stone sculptures and inscriptions dating back to 9th century to 16th century AD, excavated on the site of ancient temples at Rajoregarh, Neelkanth, Tijara, Machedi, Nandgaon and Sainthali. The 15th century inscriptions of Iskandar Isawai and Akbar are engraved in Persian and Urdu in red sandstone. The 9th century sculptured images of Shiv Parvati and Surya on seven-horse chariot in red sandstone is beautiful. A 10th century red sandstone pillar carved meticulously is also on display. The images of Mahavir and Parsavnath in meditative posture in white marble inscribed in Devnagri were found at Bharatpur. The sculptured image of an eight-armed Lord Ganesh of 9th century is eye-catching. The stone sculptures of goddess Laxmi and Varah Bhagwan date back to 11th century.

The stone inscriptions are engraved in Hindi, Sanskrit and Persian languages. The stone inscription of 959 AD gives information about Raja Vijayapala of Kannauj. The inscription of 1782 informs about Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh. The 16th century Bahadurpur and Jain stone inscriptions are engraved in Sanskrit.

The museum has collection of royal costumes, crockery and utility items. One of the shelves is full of royal costumes made of wool, cotton and synthetic cloth like waist coat of Maharaja Jai Singh, coat of Maharaja Shivdan, *Angrakha* and *Lungi* of Maharaja Mangal Singh, *Kanwal* of Maharaja Jai Singh, *Choga* and pajama of Maharaja Vinay Singh, *Jama* and *Angrakha* of Maharaja Jai Singh. The bed covers, sheets, quilts, turban, caps, whip, gupti, waist belt etc. used by the royal family are also displayed.

The sandalwood cosmetic boxes, flower pots, toys, seals, hooqua, water vase etc. are decorated with inlaid ivory with the images of foliages, gods, birds and animals. Lacquer work of Kashmir on wood using gold, silver and black colours is done exquisitely on the items like boxes, bed legs, pen holder, toilettes box, milk and water bottle. The lacquer work on arts and crafts objects like elephant, lion, water vase, tumblers, dishes etc. in white and black marble is stunning. A model of

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Maratha Durbar made of ivory is amazing. The stuffed 9 ft. long tiger, shot down by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh, and 7 ft. long panther are eye-catching. A long and wide dining table made of German silver has a device, when activated, gives an illusion of floating fish in the narrow water canals on the top surface covered with glass. A few musical instruments used in Rajasthani folk music are also displayed.

The original scripts like Rukka Bulleshah, Kuliyat-i-Amir Khusro, Yusuf Zule Khan and illustrated *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat* have been kept carefully in the glass shelves. Akbar Nama, Babar Nama consisting of 457 pages and 18 colour pages, Fasana Ajayab, Pana Nama, Firdaus's Shah Nama, Quran Sharief, Gulistan of Shekhsadi, Sikandar Nama etc. are the rare collection in the museum. Shekhsadi wrote Gulistan in 1258. Maharaja Vinay Singh took the services of Mirza Aga Khan of Delhi to write the Gulistan (the garden of roses) in coloured pages and pictures in 1840. It took 16 years to complete the book, as one page was prepared in 15 days. It has 17 colour pictures.

The miniature painting gallery has collection of paintings of 19th century belonging to Mughal, Bundi, Jaipur and Alwar schools. The images of Hindu and Muslim saints, Geet Govinda, Krishan Leela, Barahmasa, hunting scenes, romantic moments, birds and animals, royal court and procession of Akbar have been portrayed colourfully.

The armoury gallery has collection of swords adorned with gold and silver hilt, swords of Nadir Shah, Akbar and Shahjahan, besides, musketry, daggers, shields, guns, pistols, spheres, knives, bow and arrows. The guns and cannons were manufactured at Machedi, Tijara, Thanagaji and Rajgarh. The protected body gears of Mohd. Ghauri and Yashwant Rao Holkar are also displayed.

History

Alughrai, son of Raja Kakildev of Amber founded the city Alpur, the present Alwar and built a fort on 1000 ft. high hill in 1049 AD, presently in ruins. Chauhans added a few

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buildings in the fort. The Sultans of Delhi Sultanate, Iltumish and Balban continued their hold over Alwar. Taimur captured it at the end of 14th century. Behlol Lodhi snatched it from Ahmed Khan. Subsequently, Rana Sanga of Mewar conquered Alwar from Lodhis. Hasan Khan Mewati along with his battery of troops accompanied Rana Sanga in the battle against Babar and died in the battlefield.

Hemu of Machedi (Matsyapuri) launched an attack on Mughals by defeating its governor Tardibeg at Delhi. Mughal emperor Akbar responded fiercely to the advances of Hemu and defeated him in the battle of Panipat in 1556. Hemu fell on the ground after being hit by an arrow and Behram Khan beheaded him. Mughal army was garrisoned in Alwar fort during the reign of Aurangzeb. Maharaja Surajmal of Bharatpur snatched Alwar from Mughals in 1756. Pratap Singh, a feudal lord of Kachhawa clan was a commander in the Mughal army. He defeated Raja Surajmal in 1775. Mughal emperor Shah Alam conferred on him the title of Rao Raja Bahadur along with the jagir of Machedi. Raja Pratap Singh captured Alwar fort and laid the foundation of Alwar State on December 25, 1775. Raja Pratap Singh fought many battles. He built small forts in his state. Raja Pratap Singh died without son in 1791. He adopted Bakhtawar Singh, son of a chief Thakur Dheer Singh as next heir of the state. The chiefs of Alwar belonged to Lalawat branch of Naruka Rajput, an offshoot of Kachhawas.

Marathas were playing havoc in Rajputana by plundering the region. Raja Bakhtawar Singh entered into treaty with British government in 1803 which put an end to the plundering activities of Marathas. Raja Bakhtawar Singh died in 1815 at the age of 39. He had adopted his nephew Vinay Singh to inherit the throne. Bakhtawar Singh had a son Balwant Singh from a Muslim prostitute. A war of succession broke out between Vinay Singh and Balwant Singh. However, Vinay Singh ascended the throne of Alwar while Balwant Singh was given jagir by the British government. Raja Vinay Singh sent military assistance to British army during the mutiny of 1857.

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After the death of Raja Vinay Singh, his son Shivdan Singh ascended the throne of Alwar at the age of 12 years. British government appointed political agent of Alwar in 1858 to look after the state's affairs. Shivdan died in 1874. After him, Jagirdar Mangal Singh came to power who died in 1892. His son Jai Singh seated on the throne at the age of 10. Jai Singh participated in Round Table conference in London in 1923. He died in 1937 and Tez Singh son of Jagirdar Thakur Ganga Singh seated on the throne. Alwar became a part of Matsya Union in 1948 and merged into India in 1949.

Tourist attractions around Alwar

Siliser lake is 13 km from Alwar city. The lake is spread over an area of 10.5 sq. km. Maharaja Vinay Singh had built the palace here in 1845 which has been converted into a hotel Lake Palace. **Jaisamand** lake, 6 km from city was constructed by Maharaja Jai Singh in 1910. **Sariska** is 37 km from Alwar. Sariska wildlife sanctuary is spread over an area of 765.80 sq. km. It was established in 1955. Sariska palace was built by Maharaja Jai Singh in honour of duke of Edinburgh during his visit to the sanctuary. It has been converted into a hotel.

Small Forts of Mewat

Bhangarh Fort, Alwar

Bhangarh fort is situated in Alwar district at 22°8' north latitude and 76°06' east longitude in the northeastern part of Rajasthan. It is 100 km from district headquarters Alwar and 85 km from Jaipur. The ground level fort is surrounded by Aravalli ridges. A large part of the fort is in depleted condition, though its main structure stands erected that reminds the grandeur of the past when it was bustling with life. The fort built of red sandstone is unique in architecture as compared to other forts of Rajasthan. The fort has three-level rampart one of which runs over the mountain slope that secures the fort. The outer rampart has five gateway viz. Delhi gate, Phoolbari gate, Hanuman gate, Lahori gate and Ajmeri gate.

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A *chhatri* on the mountain top is eye-catching. There are ruins of shops built symmetrically on the both sides of main leading passage to the fort through Hanuman gate. A concrete pathway in the middle of the lawn links the fort through a flight of steps. The pathway is flanked by multi-storeyed havelis, temples, mosque, palaces, stables etc. most of them are in depleted condition. The temples of Gopinath, Hanuman, Shiv, Mangla Devi and Keshav Rai are built of sandstone and carved beautifully with secular figures in Nagar style dating back to 16-17th century.

It is believed that Kachhawa rulers of Amber probably Madho Singh, son of Raja Bhagwant Das built Bhangarh in 1573. He fought battles for Mughal emperor Akbar. After Madho Singh, his son Chhatra Singh ascended the throne of Bhangarh. Many of its inhabitants had embraced Islam during the reign of Aurangzeb. Sawai Jai Singh-II attacked Bhangarh and annexed it to his state in 1720.

Legend has it that Princess Ratnawati of Bhangarh was renowned for her beauty. Many had a wish to win the heart of the princess. Singhia, a tantrik, who lived in the area, had the same wish too. One day a maid of the princess visited market to buy the perfume for the princess. Tantrik came to know about it and practiced black magic on the perfume to win her heart. Princess came to know about it and threw the perfume on a boulder. The boulder started rolling down towards the tantrik which subsequently crushed him to death. Singhia, before dying, cursed the princess that she would meet the same end soon and the Bhangarh would be ruined and the souls of the dead would wander without rebirth. In the following year, a battle between Bhangarh and Ajabgarh took place in which all died including the princess.

The fort is said to be haunted by spirits. Hence, it is locally called Bhooton ka Bhangarh. Archaeological Survey of India has put a notice on the main gate which reads "Staying After Sunset Is Strictly Prohibited In The Area". Presently, the renovation work is in progress at Bhangarh.

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Ajabgarh Fort, Alwar

Ajab Singh, son of Chhatra Singh built the fort of Ajabgarh in 1635. Chhatra Singh was the son of Madho Singh of Amber. The fort is situated over a moderate hill along the road in solitude. The landscape round the fort is calm and beautiful amid lush green fields. The small fort has four bastions. It is 15 km from Bhangarh. Several houses along the road at Ajabgarh are in ruins and deserted except a few shops and houses. Nobody wish to occupy the deserted houses. Legend has it that the village was cursed by the tantric that it would not flourish, but haunted by ghosts and bad spirits.

Fort of Kankavadi, Sariska, Alwar

Kankavadi fort is situated on a hill in the vicinity of Sariska wild life reserve. It is 15 km from Sariska forest reserve and 105 km from Jaipur. The fort was built by Parmar rulers and is enclosed by a strong rampart with bastions. The fort has small chambers, temples, water reservoir and cenotaphs.

Fort of Indore, Tapukara, Alwar

The fort is perched on a hill known as Kalapahar in village Sare, 8 km from Tapukara town in Alwar district. The three gateways lead to the fort complex which houses palaces, court, temples and baradari, presently in depleted condition. Nikumbha Rajputs are believed to have originally constructed this fort which later developed by Khanzada rulers. The fort has witnessed the assault of Mughals and Pathans. The fort is located in the northeastern part of Alwar at a distance of 175 km from Jaipur.

Tijara Fort Palace, Alwar

The Tijara fort is situated on a moderate hill in Tijara town of Alwar district. It is 52 kms from Alwar city and about 200 kms from Jaipur approachable from Dharuhera-Alwar road link and from Khairthal railway station on Delhi-Jaipur rail link. Tijara was also known by the name of "Trigat Nagar" during the Ramayana period. The fort was built by Maharaja

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Balwant Singh who started its construction in 1835 after the name of his mother Moosi Maharani and was completed in 13 years. The fort is masonry work of sandstone, rock stone, marble and lime mortar. The mansion has four bastions on four corners crowned with domed kiosks. The double pillars of Rani Mahal and Mardana Mahal supporting the floral arch look fabulous. The 4-storeyed castle with tiers of arched corridors facing each other and secured by balustrade look below the central courtyard. The castle of British period reflects Rajput and Afghan architecture with imperial touch as the architects from Afghanistan and Delhi were engaged for its construction. The fort affords a panoramic view of Tijara town from the top storey with large expanse of green fields crowned with Aravali hills.

The Alwar State was divided into two parts after the death of Maharaja Bakhtawar Singh of Alwar State in 1815. Two-third of the state with capital at Alwar City was awarded to Maharaja Viney Singh, nephew of Maharaja Bakhtawar Singh while the remaining one-third of the state consisting of the Parganas of Tijara, Kishangarh, Mandhan, Karnikot and Mundawar with its capital at Tijara was awarded to Maharaja Balwant Singh, son of Maharaja Bakhtawar Singh. After the death of Maharaja Balwant Singh, the jagir of Tijara was taken back by Alwar state. The Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation has leased out this Fort for 60 years to the Neemrana Group of Hotels for restoration and conversion into a Heritage Hotel.

Kesroli Fort, Alwar

The Kesroli fort is situated on the hill in Kesroli town at a distance of 14 kms from Alwar city. The 14th Century A.D. fort was built by Yadhuvanshi Rajputs who converted to Islam and were named Khanzadas. Its rampart consisting of seven bastions attains the height of 150-200 feet at different levels. The fort consists of several beautiful chambers embellished with murals of Mughal and Rajasthani art. The fort unfolds a beautiful landscape of the town from atop the fort. The fort was assaulted by Mughals and Jat rulers before occupying it

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finally by Rajputs in 1775. The successor of the fort Thakur Mangal Singh handed over the fort to the Neemrana Group of Hotels in 1995 which converted it into a Heritage Hotel.

Pratapgarh Fort, Alwar

This fort is perched on the hill in village Pratapgarh at a distance of 20 kms from tehsil Thanagazi in district Alwar. Maharaja Pratap Singh of Alwar State built this fort. The fort is enclosed by strong rampart with bastions and is accessible through two gateways. The fort houses palaces, temples, water reservoir and cannons. It also unfolds the panoramic view of the Pratapgarh town as well as the Alwar state from atop the fort. It is about 80 kms from Jaipur and 50 kms from Alwar city. It is now a heritage hotel.

Fort of Rajgarh, Alwar

The fort of Rajgarh is situated on a small hill in the main city of Rajgarh in Alwar district. After passing through busy market and narrow streets for about one and a half km, one enters into a large gateway facing the police station. From here a low gradient starts through second gateway flanked by rampart dotted with gun points on one side and the fort wall on the other, leading to the third gateway, the main entrance of the fort. The gateway is flanked by a huge bastion on the right and the two storeyed building on the left. The 4-5 storeyed Rajgarh fort occupies a large space and unfolds a beautiful landscape of the Rajgarh town below. The fort was protected from all sides by the watch towers erected on the hill around the fort. These 3-4 watch towers look like small forts at distance once mounted with cannons. Most of the mansions in the fort are in depleted condition. The interior is void of any embellishment now. The monument remains unattended and deserted. The fort is in regular stage of depletion. A part of the fort complex runs a school. Rajgarh falls on Delhi-Jaipur rail link and is 110 kms from Jaipur.

The fort of Rajgarh was built by Raja Pratap Singh who made it his capital before founding the Alwar State in 1771.

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The fort reflects the architectural features of both fort and palace. The top is crowned with open arched balconies with curved roof studded with finials at the apex. The overhanging balconies with curved roof studded with finials emerge all rounds and decorate the façade of the inner apartments and havelis. The fort complex houses several apartments, palaces, temples, havelis and water tanks. The main hall on the ground floor has a spacious hall with an arched balcony in the back and a window opening on the backside. The hall is supported on twin floral base marble pillars. The white plaster walls are finished like marble once embellished with colourful paintings, frescoes and carvings are now peeled off and faded away. The palaces have small inter-connected chambers with low roof and alcoves in the walls. The courtyard is flanked by arcaded corridors supported on twin floral base marble pillars. The stairs and low gradient passage connect the upper stories. The fort has several secret passages.

Neemrana Fort Palace, Alwar

The Neemrana Fort Palace is situated on the Arawali hill ranges unfolding a panoramic view of the town. It was built in 1464 and located near the Delhi-Jaipur highway. It is spread over an area of 10 hectares and 25 acres. Many foreign tourists visit the hotel which has now earned a reputation for its Rajasthani and French cuisines. It is built of red sandstone with impressive façade of overhanging balconies, domed kiosks, strategically located bastions, etc. A small swimming pool is located on the top level. The hotel provides 6 deluxe suites, 5 suites, 7 standard suites, 13 standard double rooms, 10 double rooms decorated in Rajput and colonial style. It is 122 kms from Delhi, 120 kms from Alwar and 138 kms from Jaipur.

Sariska Palace, Alwar

The Sariska Palace was built by Maharaja Jai Singh of Alwar during the last quarter of 19th century. It was originally a royal hunting lodge. The terrace overlooks the large expanse of forests of Sariska wild life sanctuary. The hotel has 47 rooms which have been decorated with traditional art and artifacts

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with all modern amenities. It is now a heritage hotel. It is 200 kms. from Delhi and 125 kms from Jaipur.

Shergarh fort, Dholpur

Shergarh fort is situated on the bank of river Parwan in the southern part of Dholpur district of Rajasthan at 27°50'north latitude and 78°17' east longitude. Raja Dhawaldev of Tomar clan founded the city Dhawalpur which came to be known as Dholpur. It is bounded by Bharatpur and Agra district of Uttar Pradesh in the north, Moraina and Gwalior of Madhya Pradesh in the west. The district has total area of 3034 sq. km. It is 298 km from Jaipur.

It is believed that Parmar Rajputs had built this fort in 10th century AD. Raja Jalim Singh had built the rampart of the fort. The fort houses Laxminarayan temple, Durga temple, Somnath temple, baori, palace of Amir Khan, soldiers' residence, stores etc. Laxminarayan temple has 11th century stone inscription which informs about the Parmar rulers. A 9th century stone inscription in Sanskrit gives information about Bodh Vihar. The walls are embellished with the carved images of Hindu and Jain deities, most of them in ruins. The fort is in depleted condition.

Shergarh was originally known as Koshvardhan. When Shershah Suri occupied it during his expedition on Malwa in 1542, he named it Shergarh. It also remained under the possession of Dod Rajputs of Parmar clan, Khinchi Chauhans, Sultans of Malwa, Mughals and the Hadas. Chauhan rulers captured Shergarh from Parmars in 15th century followed by Sultan of Malwa. When Mughals annexed Malwa to Mughal empire, Shergarh came under their control. Mughals handed over Shergarh to Rao Bhim Singh of Kota who added more buildings in the fort.

Kumher Palace, Bharatpur

Kumher palace is located at a distance of 15 km from Bharatpur on Deeg-Bharatpur road. The palace is situated on moderate gradient, a few yards from the road. The multi-

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storeyed palace is built of red sandstone. The main arched entrance leads to courtyard laid out in red sandstone flanked by tiers of arcaded pavilions. The palace though appears fabulous, is presently in ruins. The roof, walls and its plaster along with murals are peeled off at places.

Lal Mahal, Rupvas (Bharatpur)

Rup Singh, the Jat ruler built a palace in red sandstone along with a beautiful water reservoir in 17th century, hence it was called Lal Mahal. It is 35 km from Bharatpur in Rupwas tehsil. The palace comprises five courtyards entered through a lofty arched gateway. Rup Singh got the jagir of Rupwas from Mughal emperor Jahangir which was subsequently given to Amanullah. Rup Singh was descendant of Maharana of Chittaurgarh.

Golbagh Palace, Bharatpur

The Golbagh Palace has been the residence of the former rulers of Bharatpur. It is now heritage hotel. The palace has over 100 rooms including 6 deluxe and 6 super deluxe rooms equipped with all modern amenities.

Laxmi Vilas Palace, Bharatpur

The ground level Laxmi Vilas Palace looks gorgeous due to its beautiful façade consisting of overhanging balconies, arcaded corridors enclosed by balustrade in sandstone, latticed windows and the domed kiosks on the top. The top storey is enclosed by stone grill. The building is painted white from outside. It is 190 kms from Delhi and 55 kms. from Agra. The palace has 22 double bed rooms and a multi-cuisine restaurant. It is 6 kms from the main city of Bharatpur.

Vijaygarh fort, Bayana (Bharatpur)

Chandravavnshi Maharaja Vijaypal of Mathura built a hill fort at Bayana in the early 11th century A.D. and named it Vijaygarh after him. The fort is encircled by a massive wall strengthened with round bastions. The fort contains palaces,

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baoris, havelis, temples, pillars and minar. Rani Mahal, Hanumanji-ka-Mandir, Bhim Lat and minar are important monuments inside the fort. The main attraction in the fort is an inscription dated 372 AD which records the erection of the sacrificial post on the completion of a '*pundarika*' sacrifice by Vishnuvardhana, a feudatory of Samudragupta. Bhim Lat or the Pillar of Victory is 26 ft.3 inches high in red sandstone. The fort embodies Indo-Islamic architecture. It is 48 km from Bharatpur. Bayana is 220 km from Delhi and of equal distance from Jaipur, connected with rail/road network.

History

Bayana was earlier known as Shantipura, Shripath, Vijaymandirgarh, Sultangarh etc. which got its present name Bayana in the 12th century AD. A fragmentary inscription dated 300 AD indicates the presence of Yaudheys in the region. Bayana inscription of 955 AD refers a queen named Chitralekha who erected the temple of Vishnu. The gold coins of Gupta period found near Bayana indicate that the region was under Gupta dynasty. Hunas had sway over Bayana. When Pratihars came to power, they annexed Bayana to their state until defeated by Chauhans. Vijaygarh has witnessed the onslaught of Ghauri, Slaves, Tughlaks, Lodhis and Mughals. Mohd. Ghauri attacked Bayana in 1196 and captured it along with Tawangarh, 15 km from Bayana. Tawangarh fort was built by Tawanpal, son of Vijaypal. Slave dynasty retained its control over Bayana. Bayana was reoccupied by *Chandravanshi* Rajputs in 1348 from Muslim rulers till it was conquered by Firoz Tughlak in 1394. Sikander Lodhi subjugated Bayana in 1492. Rana Sanga of Mewar conquered Bayana from Ibrahim Lodhi. It fell into the hands of Shershah Suri. Mughal emperor Akbar occupied it in 1557. Jats of Bharatpur conquered it from Mughals in the first quarter of 18th century.

Tourist attractions at Bayana

Jhajri is a square hall of medieval period with pillared porch having dome-shaped roof resting on an octagonal drum. **Usha Mandir** is quadrangular building entered through a big

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gateway leading to a courtyard with sides in the form of rows of pillars forming aisles. **Lodhi Minar** was built by Daud Khan Ohdi in 1447 who administered Bayana till 1456. **Brahmabad Idgah,** is a mosque situated across Gambhiri river near Brahmabad village. It is entered through an arched gateway flanked by pillared *chhatris* on either side. **Islam Shah Gate** is double-storey gateway that leads to step-well. **Jahangiri Gate** is built of red sandstone. The spandrel of the arch is decorated with flower motifs and beam is supported by three-tier brackets. **Sarai Sad Ullah**–the inscription engrave on the wall of the building assigns its construction to Sheikh Sad Ullah in 1565-66.

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Hadoti Region

Taragarh Fort, Bundi

Taragarh fort is perched on top of 1426 ft. high hill in Bundi town in southeastern part of Rajasthan at 25°28' north latitude and 75°42' east longitude. Bundi is bounded by Tonk in the north, Bhilwara in the west, Chittaurgarh in the southwest, Kota in the southeast and Sawai Madhopur in the northeast. Chambal river flows through the southeast boundary of the district (5,550 sq. km) with rich flora and fauna. Rao Budh Singh had constructed a wall round the town. The fort is 5 km from Bundi railway station. Bundi is well connected with rail/road network. It is 215 km from Jaipur and 45 km from Kota.

The fort derived its name Tara-garh (Star-fort) from its star-shaped structure. Hada Rajput, Rao Nar Singh had built this fort in 1354 AD. The fort spreading over an area of 4 sq. km is solid masonry work of stone and lime mortar. The high and strong rampart of the fort consists of massive bastions enclosed by moat. Bhim Burj is one of them whereat huge cannon 'Garbh Gunjam' was installed. The rampart is devised with twin diagonal slits one above the other to view as well as hit the target simultaneously. The fort is accessed through Hathi pole, Ganesh pole and Hazari pole.

Rao Ratan Singh got built the stone sculptures of elephant on either side of pointed arch of Hathi pole. Above the Hathi pole is an arched balcony with *chhatri* on either side. Hathi pole leads to courtyard flanked by stable on one side called *'Nau Than'*, a nine-arched corridor for keeping nine horses. It was built by Rao Ratan Singh in 1607. A flight of steps from the courtyard links Dewan-i-Am in Ratan Daulat. It is a

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gateway leading to a courtyard with sides in the form of rows of pillars forming aisles. **Lodhi Minar** was built by Daud Khan Ohdi in 1447 who administered Bayana till 1456. **Brahmabad Idgah**, is a mosque situated across Gambhiri river near Brahmabad village. It is entered through an arched gateway flanked by pillared *chhatris* on either side. **Islam Shah Gate** is double-storey gateway that leads to step-well. **Jahangiri Gate** is built of red sandstone. The spandrel of the arch is decorated with flower motifs and beam is supported by three-tier brackets. **Sarai Sad Ullah**–the inscription engrave on the wall of the building assigns its construction to Sheikh Sad Ullah in 1565-66.

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spacious hall with a balcony overlooking the courtyard. The balcony is adorned with a white marble seat. The flat ceiling of the hall is supported on rows of pillars in solid stone, once embellished with semi-precious stones on its floral bases. The hall has eleven small chambers on one side with several rectangular niches.

Hathiyasal (elephant hall), Badal Mahal and Phool Mahal were built by Rao Chhatrasal Singh. Anirudh Mahal was built in 1679, later converted into Zanana Mahal. The sculptures of elephant Shiv Prasad and horse Hanza were erected by Rao Chhatrasal. The frescoes in Anirudh palace depict scenes of royalty. Chitrashala (painting gallery) was developed during the reign of Rao Ummed Singh (1748-49). The theme of the painting is religious, historical, musical, hunting, love stories, court and procession.

Chhatra Mahal is next to Dewan-i-Am. It was built by Rao Chhatrasal in 1644 in pink sandstone in Hindu style of architecture. Chhatra Mahal has an extensive court with a balcony overlooking the town dotted with cluster of whitewash houses and water reservoirs. The rectangular doorway (against the usual arched or floral doorway) of the palace is decorated with inlaid cut-glass whereas its doors are adorned with ivory work. The palace consists of two large halls with flat ceiling supported on double-row of pillars chiseled smoothly with floral top and bottom. The interior is embellished with exquisite murals in stunning red and lustrous gold depicting scenes of procession, royal court, hunting and battles in Bundi style. The ornate flat ceiling dazzles in red and gold hues. The floor is laid in geometric pattern. A black granite wall in a small chamber is carved with floral niches. The significant feature of Bundi palaces is the ornate floral and arched niches adorned with paintings of Bundi style in bright colours. A small pillared hall opposite the main palace is adorned with four tiny sculptures of elephant on each pillar. The floor is mortared in red. It has attached bathroom.

A flight of steps from the court of Chhatra Mahal leads to Phool Mahal (Flower Palace). It consists of a large hall with

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pillared veranda embellished with floral and arched niches showing stunning Rajput paintings. The veranda is supported on pink sandstone pillars decorated with inlay of cut-glass and coloured stones on their floral bases. The flat ceiling is composed of square stone slabs inlaid with 8-petalled flower on each in coloured stone in the centre. The interior is embellished with murals portraying battle scenes and royal processions. The floor is in geometric as well as in floral pattern in coloured mortar. The latticed windows are covered with coloured glasses.

The magnificent large baoris (stepped wells) in the fort still have some water. Several apartments, havelis and temples in the fortress are in ruins and deserted. The common feature of these mansions are the white plaster walls with niches, flat ceilings, stone and lime mortar pillars with simple floral bases. Some of strategically located chambers have diagonal slits to view outside. The floors are decorated in geometric as well as in floral motif in marble and lime mortar. The fort once housed a large population.

Sukh Mahal is situated on the bank of Sukh Sagar, a water reservoir. It is about 2 km from Taragarh. The light yellow painted two-storeyed mansion is topped by balcony flanked by domed kiosk on either side. The balcony with curved roof consists of eight arched openings surmounted by finials. It is built of stone and mortar. Several stone sculptures excavated in Hadoti region are displayed in the courtyard.

Shikargah (hunting lodge) is situated at a distance of about 1 km from Sukh Mahal. It is two-storeyed mansion crowned with a large balcony having curved roof topped by finials. The balcony is opened on four sides with three arches on each side. The roof has a few domed kiosks. The ground floor has an arcaded corridor flanked by small chambers.

History

Bundi was known by the name of 'Bandu ka Naal' after Meena Chieftain Bandu in ancient times. Rao Deva defeated Jaita Meena, grandson of Bandu in 1342 AD and established Hada dynasty. Bundi was made the capital of Hadoti state

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comprising the present districts of Bundi, Kota, Baran and Jhalawar. Harraj of Shakambri Chauhan was referred as Hada by the early Bhatts in their literatures hence, his descendents were called Hada.

Samar Singh, son of Rao Deva strengthened his state by suppressing Meenas and annexing the territories of Kaithun, Ramgarh and Mau to Hadoti. Samar Singh's son Jait Singh expanded the territory beyond Chambal. He was succeeded by his son Napa Singh who was killed by his brother-in-law. His son, Hama Singh seated on the throne. Rana Kshetra Singh of Mewar attacked Bundi but died in the battle. Rana Lakha launched an offensive on Bundi but was defeated by Hama Singh. Rana Lakha got built a clay fort of Bundi and smashed it to satiate his frustration. Nar Singh came to the throne after Hama and ruled for 15 years. Sultan Ahmed Shah and Sultan Mehmood Shah of Gujarat attacked Bundi in 1432 and 1453 respectively. Nar Singh died in the combat and his son, Verisal ascended the throne who ruled for 50 years. Mohd. Khilji of Malwa attacked Bundi three times in 1503, 1513 and 1515. Rao Bhandev succeeded to the throne after Verisal. Samar Singh and Amar Singh, younger brothers of Rao Bhandev had embraced Islam and favoured Muslim power against Bundi which derived Rao Bhandev to commit suicide. His son Rao Narayandas became the ruler of Bundi. He killed his uncles Samar Singh and Amar Singh in a fit of rage. Narayandas extended military help to Rana Sanga of Mewar during the invasion of Sultan of Malwa on Chittaur. Mewar won the battle and Rana Sanga got his daughter married to Rao Narayandas. Narayandas also accompanied Rana Sanga in the battle of Khanwa in 1527.

Surajmal was next in the line of heir of Bundi after Narayandas in 1530. He married the sister of Rana Ratan Singh of Mewar whereas Rana Ratan Singh married Rani Sujabai, sister of Surajmal. However, some enmity developed between them which resulted into murder of Surajmal by Ratan Singh during hunting in Bundi. Surajmal returned the attack which killed him too. Their wives committed sati on their funeral pyre.

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His son Surtan seated on the throne of Bundi in 1535. He married the daughter of Rana Shakt Singh of Mewar. Surtan remained engaged in Tantra practice which displeased the nobles who removed him and installed Rao Arjun in his place. He was grandson of Rao Bhandev. Bahadurshah of Gujarat attacked Mewar in 1555. Rao Arjun along with his troops joined Mewar army against Bahadurshah. His eldest son Rao Surjan Singh came to the throne of Bundi. Ranthambhor fort was also in his possession. Mughal emperor Akbar besieged Ranthambhor fort forcing Surjan Singh to acknowledge his supremacy which he did. Akbar bestowed upon him the title of Raja. Surjan Singh won many battles for Mughals. Akbar appointed him the governor of Varanasi where he spent his remaining life. Surjan Singh had three sons - Rao Bhoj, Duda and Raimal. Akbar sent an expedition to Gujarat under the command of Rao Bhoj and Duda. They won the battle and occupied Ahmednagar fort. Akbar built Bhoj Burj in the name of Rao Bhoj in the fort.

Rao Ratan Singh, son of Rao Bhoj put down the revolt of Khurram against Jahangir in 1579. Rao Ratan Singh detained Khurram but later released him. Khurran (Shahjahan) on becoming the emperor awarded the jagir of Kota to Madhav Singh, son of Rao Ratan Singh in 1631 which became an independent principality. Rao Ratan Singh had four sons - Gopinath, Madhav Singh, Hari and Jagannath. Gopinath was killed by a Brahmin as the former had relations with the Brahmin's daughter. Chhatrasal, eldest son of Gopinath became the ruler of Bundi. Rao Chhatrasal commanded Mughal army and conquered Bidar. The war of succession broke out amongst the sons of Shahjahan. Chhatrasal sided with Dara Shikoh against Aurangzeb. A fierce combat between the forces of Dara Shikoh and Aurangzeb took place at Dholpur in which Chhatrasal died along with his son Bharat Singh, brother Mokham Singh and other Sardars. Dara was detained and later slayed mercilessly. Chhatrasal fought 52 battles. He built Chhatrasal Mahal at Taragarh fort. A temple of Keshavrai was also built during his reign.

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Rao Chhatrasal had four sons – Rao Bhav Singh, Bhim Singh, Bhagwant Singh and Bharat Singh. Bhim Singh and Bhagwant Singh were given jagirs. Rao Bhav Singh ascended the throne under Mughal supremacy. He died without son in 1682. Anirudh Singh, son of Bhim Singh was the next heir of Bundi. He also fought battles for Mughals. Rao Anirudh Singh had two sons – Budh Singh and Jodh Singh. Budh Singh seated on the throne of Bundi. Aurangzeb was on the death bed when his sons revolted for the throne. Budh Singh sided with Shah Alam while Rao Ram Singh of Kota sided with Aurangzeb's second son Azam. Other Rajput rulers also offered military help to Azam and Shah Alam. Both sides suffered heavy losses in the battlefield. Rao Ram Singh of Kota and Azam died in the battle. Rao Budh Singh was married to Amar Kunwar, sister of Raja Jai Singh of Amber but had no issue. Budh Singh's second wife Rani Chundawati had two sons. Amar Kunwar declared herself pregnant and adopted a child Bhawani Singh secretly and declared him her own born son. Raja Jai Singh killed Bhawani Singh. He also removed Budh Singh from Bundi and installed Dalel Singh in his place and got her second sister Krishan Kunwar married to Dalel Singh in 1729. Rao Budh Singh's wife sought help from Maratha leader Hulkar to dethrone Dalel Singh from Bundi. Hulkar snatched the fort from Dalel Singh and restored it to Rao Budh Singh. As soon as Hulkar left for Pune, Jai Singh reinstated Dalel Singh.

Budh Singh had two sons Ummed Singh and Deep Singh. Ummed Singh with the help of Raja Durjansal of Kota recaptured Bundi after a stiff fight with Amber forces. After Ummed, his son Ajit Singh came to the throne. Ajit Singh had killed Rana of Mewar. His wife before committing sati cursed Ajit Singh for his end within two months. Ajit Singh suffered from fatal disease and died. Bishan Singh, son of Ajit Singh ruled the state for 17 years and died of illness in 1821. He advised his wife not to commit sati on his death. Bundi entered into treaty with British government which protected the state from Marathas. Col. Todd was appointed British political agent.

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Tourist attractions in Bundi

The water reservoirs - Phool Sagar, Jait Sagar and Naval Sagar were a good source of water. **Phool Sagar** is flanked by two small palaces and a *chhatri* in the middle. It was built by Rao Raja Bhoj Singh in the 17th century. It is presently the residence of former ruler. Phool Sagar is 5 km from the city. A temple dedicated to Lord Varun stands half submerged in the centre of the **Naval Sagar** lake. **Jait Sagar** enclosed by hills was built by Jaita Meena in the 14th century. It is 3 km from the town. **Raniji ki Baori** was built by Rani Nathavatji in 1699. It is 46-metre deep stepped well bearing carvings on its pillars and high arched gate. It is 300 ft. long and 40 ft. wide. Shikar Burj was a royal hunting lodge surrounded by lush greenery. **Sukh palace**, situated on the Sukh Sagar lake was built by Raja Bishan Singh in 1773, as summer resort. **A three-story chhatri** of 84 pillars is one and a half km in village Devpura. It was built in the memory of Rao Deva. It has five domes of which the central large dome is flanked by four small domes on the corners. **Keshar Bagh** is 5 km from Bundi. It has 66 cenotaphs of Bundi rulers and their queens including the *chhatri* of Prince Duda, son of Raja Surjan Singh who fought for Mughals and died in a battle in 1581. *Chhatri* of Raja Vishnu carved with the images of his queens who committed sati on his death was built in 1821. **Rameshwaram** is a cave temple of Lord Shiv surrounded by Aravalli. It is 20 km from the town. **Keshavraipatan** is an ancient city famous for the temple of Keshavraiji (incarnation of Lord Vishnu). It was built by Maharaja Shatrusal of Bundi in 1601. **Ramgarh sanctuary** is 45 km on the Nainwa road.

Fort of Kota

Rao Jait Singh founded the Kota city and built a fort after eliminating Bhil chieftain, Koteya in 1264 AD. The fort of Kota is situated at the heart of Kota city at 25°11' north latitude and 75°58' east longitude in the eastern part of Rajasthan. Kota is located along the eastern bank of Chambal river at an altitude of 251.1 metres above sea level. It is also an administrative

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headquarters of Kota district, bounded by Bundi in the north, Baran in the east, Jhalawar in the south and Chittaurgarh in the west. The city was also enclosed by a strong wall consisting of huge bastions, presently occupied by locals who have built houses over them. Kota is well connected by rail/road network within and outside the state. The nearest airport is Jaipur at a distance of 250 km. It is 504 km from Delhi and 270 km from Udaipur.

The ground-level Kota fort is masonry work of stone and lime mortar with a little use of red sandstone representing Hindu architecture. A ramp through an arched gateway leads to an extensive court flanked by a large palace complex, known as Old Palace. It is accessible from Hathian pole flanked by cannon on either side. This pole was built by Rao Madho Singh (1625-1649). Rao Bhim Singh-I (1707-1720) brought two stone sculptures of elephant from Bundi fort and mounted them on either side of the pointed arch of Hathian pole. The sculptures are painted light blue with their trunks extending towards each other, commanded by Mahawat. The pole along with its nailed-doors is painted in Kota style in floral motif. The images of two female guards on either side of the gateway are shown holding gun by the one and shield and sword by the other. An opened balcony over the Hathian pole is crowned with a large dome surrounded by four small domes topped by finials. The entire edifice is painted white, crowned with cluster of white domes supported on red pillars enclosed by balustrades also in red colour. The unique feature of domes is its square base and round top surmounted by carved lotus at the apex. A part of the façade in red and yellow hue resembles with Hawa Mahal of Jaipur.

The temple of Brajnathji is located inside Hathian pole. It is followed by Borsali ki Deori which opens onto courtyard of the palace housing Maharao Madho Singh Museum. Old Palace consists of several chambers embellished with inlay of blue, green and red mirrors on the white plaster walls along the exquisite murals. The images of royal insignia have been

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shown on the wall-mounted glass frame. Arjun Mahal, Chhatra Mahal and Laxmi Bhandar on the upper storey are adorned with beautiful wall paintings in Kota style. The Holi of elephants is drawn in Laxmi Bhandar. Bhim Mahal on the first floor served as Dewan-i-Khas and has collection of large carpets. Rao Madho Singh built Bada Mahal, embellished with wall paintings on themes relating to the royalty and their life style. It was the private residence of Kota rulers. The outer room of Bada Mahal is decorated with picture frames on the walls. Suraj Gokh (a latticed window) is decorated with coloured glasses. Haveli of Fauzdar Jhala Jalim Singh is located on the second floor. It is embellished with inlaid mirrors and murals depicting scenes of royal court, hunting, female dancers etc.

Maharao Madho Singh Museum was founded on March 30, 1970. The museum consists of several galleries and ornate chambers viz. Durbar Hall, Armoury gallery, wild life gallery, photo gallery, miniature painting gallery, paintings in Arjun Mahal, Dewan-i-Khas of Bhim Mahal, miniature paintings in Krishan Bhandar, inlay work in Bada Mahal, murals of Chhatra Mahal. These galleries are located on ground floor, first floor and second floor. A few of the galleries may be visited after obtaining special permission.

Durbar hall is embellished with mirror work. The main attraction of Durbar hall is the sculptured image of Maharao Ummed Singh-II. Durbar hall displays the following items including articles in gold, silver, brass, and *ashtadhatu* (guild of 8 metals) possessed by the royalty: harmonium of Maharani Jadechiji Sahiba, idols of deity Gangaur, playing cards (*Ganjpha)* which are 120 in numbers, *Chaupad* built of ivory and metal, silver toys used for religious purposes, tiny silver images of animals, boxes for keeping garments, robes of royalty, articles made from ivory, marble and bon china, pen stand tied on the waist, fan run on kerosene, silver and gold hauda, palanquins, embroidered cloth bearing the image of royal insignia of Kota that was tied on the elephant's forehead, cradle

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of Thakurji carved and embellished with inlaid work, brass vessel weighing 29 kg. used by Fauzdar Jhala Jalim Singh for bathing and the *Sidh yantra*. In the veranda there are water clock, sun clock and *khagol* yantra.

Arms gallery displays weaponry like swords, shields, daggers, spheres, bow-arrows, gupti, guns, pistols, body armour of horse, khukri etc. The gallery also displays royal insignia like flags, golden sticks, *chob*, *morchhal*, golden *chanwar*. Mahi Martab presented by Mughal emperor Mohammad Shah to Maharao Bhim Singh in 1720 and a pair of *Nakkara* presented by Mughal emperor Bahadurshah to Maharao Bhim Singh are also displayed.

Wild life gallery displays the stuffed skin of lion, leopard, tiger, bear, crocodile, fish, sambhar and a few birds, hunted by the royalty. Photo gallery displays the photographs of historic events of Kota since 1880 including revolt of 1857. Painting gallery displays Mughal and Rajput style of painting on religious theme in which Srinathji's image is one of the attractions.

Jag Mandir

Jag Mandir is situated amid the artificial lake of Kishore Sagar. It is about 2 km from the fort. Maharani Braj Kunwar Bai of Udaipur (second daughter of Rana Sangram Singh) built the two-storey Jag Mandir in red sandstone. The cenotaphs of royalty are located in Keshar Bagh of Jag Mandir. Jag Mandir is built on a square platform enclosed by red sandstone balustrade with four round and four square balconies. The round balconies crowned with domes and secured by balustrade are erected on four corners of the square platform. The square balconies fall in between the two round balconies and have curved roof adorned with finials. The architecture is similar to Deeg palace of Bharatpur. The upper storey is an open floral arched pavilion with flat roof and *chhatri* on four corners topped by finials. The walls, eaves and *chhatris* are in white plaster while the balustrade and pillars are in red sandstone.

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Brijvilas Bhawan

Brijvilas Bhawan is two furlongs from Jag Mandir. It houses Government Museum which has collection of rare coins, manuscripts, stone inscriptions and sculptures of various Hindu deities discovered in Hadoti region and belong to Gupta-medieval period. The silver and brass coins found here were minted between Kushana and Mughal period. The museum also displays paintings of Bundi School dating back to 16-17th century depicting scenes of Rasleela, Radha Krishan, Rag-Ragini, Bahramasa, hunting and royal court. The red and green colours have been used excessively in the paintings. Thin lips with a little blackness and wrinkles under the eyes are features of Bundi School. The inscription of Shergarh informs about a temple and Bodhvihar built by Devdat of *Nagvansh* in 790 A.D. The stone inscription of 1086 AD of Jhalarapatan refers the construction of a temple and baori during the reign of Parmar Raja Udaiditya of Ujjain. The inscription of 8th and 9th century of Pratihar period and idols of Hindu deities were discovered in Attru, Badoli and Chandrabhaga areas. Jain sculptures dating back to 9-10th century were discovered in Baran and Jhalawar districts. The inscription of Gupta period was discovered in Kota. Armoury section has collection of ancient weaponry.

History

Madho Singh, son of Raja Ratan Singh of Bundi fought a decisive battle of Burhanpur for Mughals in 1579. In recognition of his exemplary services, Mughal emperor Shahjahan awarded Kota to Madho Singh who ruled it as an independent province. He expanded the fort of Kota and replaced the mud walls with stone walls. Madho Singh also built Bada Mahal, Bolsari ki Deori, doors of Sailar Gaji, Kaithuni pole, Patan pole and Bhilwari pole. He had five sons – Mukund Singh, Mohan Singh, Jaijhar Singh, Karni Ram and Kishore Singh. Madho Singh was succeeded by his eldest son Mukund Singh (1649-57). Mukund Singh and his brothers fought a battle for Shahjahan against Aurangzeb in which Mukund Singh died.

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His son Jagat Singh (1657-83) seated on the throne of Kota and died childless. Mukund Singh built palace of Abli Mini, rampart of the fort, gardens and hunting lodge. Prem Singh, son of Karni Ram acceded to the throne but was removed by the nobles on account of his weak governance. Kishore Singh (1684-95) succeeded as ruler and died in a battle. Kishore Singh built Kishore Sagar, Kishore Sagar Bagh, Kishorepura village. He had three sons – Vishan Singh, Ram Singh and Harnath Singh.

Vishan Singh was succeeded by Ram Singh (1695-1707). Ram Singh built Rampura bazaar, Rawtha pond and doors of Suraj pole. After the death of Ram Singh, Bhim Singh (1707-20) ruled over Kota efficiently and commanded Mughal army in many expeditions. He died in one of the battles. Bhim Singh built Krishan Mahal, Bhim Mahal, Mahal in Sileh Khana, temple of Ashapura, Brajnath temple and fort of Bhimgarh. He also brought heavy cannon from Bundi to Kota. He had three sons – Arjun Singh, Shyam Singh and Durjanshal. Arjun Singh (1720-23) reigned for a short period and died childless. Arjun Singh built Arjun Mahal and Moti Mahal. Durjanshal (1723-56) after eliminating his elder brother Shyam Singh, came to the throne in 1724. He expanded the territory of his state and died childless. He was married to the princess of Mewar. He had nominated his cousin Chhatrasal, son of Ajit Singh his successor. However, Ajit Singh (1756-58) himself seated on the throne and later succeeded by Chhatrasal (1758-64). Durjanshal built Akhara Mahal, Moti Mahal and Tehkhana.

Raja Ishwari Singh of Amber attacked Kota but failed to occupy it. His brother Madho Singh brought it under his control in 1761. However, Fauzdar Jalim Singh sought the help of Maratha leader Hulkar and defeated Madho Singh. Chhatrasal died childless. His brother Guman Singh (1764-70) seated on the throne of Kota in 1766. Guman Singh died of illness. His son Ummed Singh-I (1770-1819), the prince regent ascended the throne. In 1817, Ummed Singh signed a treaty with British government. He was succeeded by his son Kishore Singh-II (1819-27). After the death of Jalim Singh in 1824, his son Madho Singh became the Fauzdar. Kishore Singh died childless in

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1828. He had nominated Ram Singh (1827-1865), son of Prithvi Singh his successor. Rao Ram Singh called on British Governor General at Ajmer in 1831 where he was welcomed with 21 shots of cannon. When governor general came to Kota, Ram Singh presented him guns, swords, daggers, horses and elephants. After the death of Jhala Madho Singh, his son Madan Singh took over as Fauzdar. Madan Singh was ruling arbitrarily which displeased Rao Ram Singh. British government resolved the dispute between Ram Singh and Madan Singh by separating the villages added by Jhala Jalim Singh to Kota. In 1837, Madan Singh founded the state Jhalawar with those villages and made Jhalarapatan its capital. Ram Singh died in 1866 at the age of 64. He was succeeded by his son Bhim Singh, also known as Chhatrasal Singh-II (1865-1888). Chhatrasal was married to the princess of Karauli in 1854. He built roads railways, water reservoirs, Akles Sagar and canal of Ramgarh

Ummed Singh-II was adopted in 1888 and installed on the throne of Kota after the death of Chhatrasal. He ruled his state efficiently. He undertook pilgrimage to Haridwar and Dwarka. He was awarded with the status of G.C.I.E. by British government in 1906 and G.B.E. in 1917. He studied at Mayo College and married the daughter of Maharana Fateh Singh of Udaipur. He was blessed with daughter who died in infancy. His wife too died early. He married the daughter of Maharao Kutch but had no issue. He married third time in the Thakur family of Isharda in Jaipur from whom Bhim Singh was born. Ummed Singh built Mahal of Nanta, repaired the forts of Gagron, Shergarh and Shahbad, built rampart from Chambal river to Suraj pole

Tourist attractions around Kota

Darrah Wildlife Sanctuary is 50 km from Kota, inhabitated by panthers, spotted dears, bears and wild boars. **Rana Pratap Sagar Dam** is 50 km from the city. Bhainsrodgarh is situated on the bank of Chambal river at a distance of 55 km. **Rock Painting** on the bank of river Alaniya is 25 km. **Badoli**

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is 48 km and is known for ancient temple of 9th century AD. The temple is adorned with intricate carvings and the image of Lord Shiv in dancing posture as Natraja. Abhera Mahal is 4 km west of Kota. The best season to visit the place is from October to February.

Fort of Gagron, Jhalawar

The fort of Gagron is situated on the high submit in Jhalawar district in southern Rajasthan. Gagron is situated on the confluence of Kalisindh and Aahu rivers at 24°36' north latitude and 76°12' east longitude. The river Aahu originates from the Aravalli mountains of Kota whereas the Kalisindh originates from Madhya Pradesh. Jhalawar was founded by Fauzdar Jhala Madan Singh of Kota in 1791 AD. It is spread over 6219 sq. km area and is bounded by Kota in the northwest, Baran in the northeast and the state of Madhya Pradesh in the west, south and southeast. Gagron is 300 km from Jaipur and 60 km from Kota.

A serpentine track in the hilly terrain leads to the fort wherefrom it unfolds a spectacular view of Gagron town. The 8th century fort has highest bastions viz. Ramburj and Dhawajburj, surrounded by moat. The fort houses palaces, armoury, temple of Sheetlamata, Jauhar kund, Dargah of Sufi saint Mitheh Sahib, *chhatri* of Rao Pipa and a catapult. Buland Darwaja in the fort was built by Aurangzeb.

History

Gagron was part of Malwa state ruled by Mauryan rulers. After the fall of Maurya empire, the region came under the control of Guptas, Parmaras and Dod Rajputs. It is believed that Dod Rajputs had built the fort of Gagron and it was also called Dodgarh. Devan Singh, a Khinchi Chauhan, occupied the fort from Dod Rajputs and named it Gagron in the 12th century. Allauddin Khilji attacked Gagron in 1303 but lost the battle from its ruler Jait Singh. Raja Piparao after becoming the disciple of Swami Ramanand nominated his younger brother Achaldas as ruler of Gagron. Rani Uma Devi of

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Achaldas was renowned for her beauty which moved Sultan Mehmood Khilji of Malwa to attack Gagron in 1436. The defenders fought bravely against the Muslim army and performed *kesaria*. Achaldas died in the battle. Rani Uma Devi along with several Rajput women performed *jauhar* in the fort.

Rana Kumbha conquered the fort from Muslims in 1437 and nominated his nephew Palahansi, as lord of Gagron. Mehmood Khilji again launched an offensive on Gagron in 1444 which lasted for months. Kumbha sent additional reinforcement to Palahansi against Muslim army. However, he lost the battle. Rajputs performed *kesaria* and *jauhar*. Rana Sanga conquered Gagron from Khilji and entrusted its charge to one Medinirai. Mehmood Khilji again invaded Gagron in 1518-19 but with little success this time. Sultan Bahadurshah of Gujarat took control of Gagron in 1532. Thereafter, Shershah Suri captured it. Mughal emperor Akbar occupied Gagron in 1561. Akbar awarded it as jagir to Prithviraj Rathore of Bikaner. Then, Hadas of Bundi captured it from Rathores. In 1817 Jhalawar entered into a treaty with British government.

Small Forts of Hadoti

Fort of Kelwara, Baran

Kelwara fort is situated in Kelwara town of Kishanganj tehsil in Baran district. It is 334 km from Jaipur connected by rail/road network. The ground-level fort is surrounded by 8 ft. deep moat. The small fort consists of a few bastions. The fort is accessed through a high arched gateway. The fort houses temples, palace and tomb of Sufi saint. Hada Rajputs ruled over the region. It is in depleted condition.

Bhainsrodgarh

Bhainsrodgarh fort is erected over a high ridge looking below the confluence of Chambal and Brahamni rivers. A long and high rampart of the fort consists of several bastions. It is believed that a merchant Bhainsa Shah and Roda of Charan caste had built this fort for protection of their caravans from

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the looters and dacoits. Some believed that Parmar Rajputs had built this fort in the 10th century AD. It is 120 km from Udaipur and 75 km from Kota. Bhainsrodgarh remained under the control of Mewar and Marwar rulers. Allauddin Khilji attacked Bhainsrodgarh in 14th century and destroyed its temples and palaces which were later reconstructed by Rana Kumbha. The Marathas plundered Bhainsrodgah during their attack on Mewar.

Navlakha Fort

Navlakha fort is situated on a hill on Jhalrapatan-Jhalawar road. It was built by Raja Prithvi Singh of Jhalawar in 1860 but he could not complete the construction. It is now used as a picnic spot by the locals. It is in ruins.

Fort of Patan

The fort of Patan is situated at higher elevation in the Aravalli range. The fort has strong and high rampart consisting of emphatic bastions. It was built by Rao Balbhadra Singh Tanwar in 1564. He died in a battle in 1601. Mahadji Scindia invaded the fort in 1790.

Indergarh, Kota

Indergarh fort was built by Raja Indrasal Singh in 1605. The fort houses temples of Bihariji, Jaleshwar Mahadev, Chandrabihari, Jain temples, Shivdan water reservoir and Baori.

Haveli Braj Bhushan, Bundi

This 4-storeyed Haveli is situated at the heart of Bundi town. It was built six decades back and belonged to prime ministers of the princely state Bundi. The Haveli occupies a large courtyard and reflects Rajasthani art and architecture. The spacious 15 rooms are equipped with modern amenities and decorated in Rajasthani style with display of historic artifacts. It is 3 kms from Bundi railway station.

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Haveli Ishwari Niwas, Bundi

Haveli Ishwari Niwas was built by Maharao Ishwari Singh about 8 decades back. It was also used as guest house until became the present residence of Maharao's brother Maharaj Kesri Singh. The mansion reflects the Indian and European architecture. It was handed over to Kesari Singh, the Maharaja's brother for his residence in 1945. The Haveli is built in a very traditional fashion with 20 spacious rooms around a courtyard where tables and chairs are arranged around a small fountain for the guests to lounge. It is 3 kms from Bundi railway station and 220 kms from Jaipur. The façade is simple in construction.

Umed Bhawan Palace, Kota

Umed Bhawan Palace was built by Maharaja Umed Snigh-II in 1905. The mansion was designed by Sir Swinton Jacob of Royal Engineers in the British Army and reflects Indo-Sarcenic architecture. It is a masonry work of mainly pink sandstone, white Khimach and Italian marble. The palace consists of Durbar Hall, Zanana mahal, Edwardian Drawing Room, Library, Billiards Room, the Banquet Hall and a cinema hall.

The Palace was expanded further in 1930 for Maharaj Kumar Bhim Singh and his bride. George Devon, the designer, designed the extended part of the palace in the same fashion. This part of Umed Bhawan is a private residence while the rest has been converted into a heritage hotel which has 25 air-conditioned rooms including suites. It is 6 kms from Kota railway station and 261 kms from Jaipur.

Brijraj Bhawan Palace Hotel, Kota

Brijraj Bhawan Palace Hotel is situated on the bank of river Chambal. It was built in 1830 as the British Residency which subsequently used as State guest house of Kota. It was converted into a heritage hotel in 1900. Lord Curzon visited this palace in 1903. Queen Mary of England also stayed here during her visit in 1911. The hotel has spacious air-conditioned

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rooms with colonial furniture equipped with modern amenities. The artifacts of the royal family are also being displayed. The sprawling lawn in front of the palace enhances the beauty of the monument. It is also the royal residence of Maharao Brijraj Singh of Kota. The hotel has 2 suites, 4 double bed rooms and one single bed room. It is 3 kms from the railway station.

Hotel Sukhdham Kothi, Kota

Sukhdham Kothi was built by the British government in 1870 as an official residence of the surgeon. Maharao Umed Singh Bahadur named it Sukhdham in 1922. It became the residence of Thakur Prithvi Singh, General Officer Commanding of Kota State forces in 1929. He had earlier served with the British Indian army. It has been converted into heritage hotel and is being maintained by the descendants of Colonel Thakur Prithvi Singh. The hotel has 14 air-conditioned and air-cool double bed rooms which are elegantly decorated. The hotel is 3 kms from railway station.

Palkiya Haveli, Kota

The 18th century Palkiya Haveli is situated on the bank of river Parvan. The central courtyard of the Haveli is flanked by the tiers of balconies. It provides a panoramic view of the river and the fort from atop the building. It has been converted into heritage hotel which has air-conditioned rooms equipped with modern amenities. The Haveli is 7 kms from railway station.

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Shekhawati Region

Shekhawati

Balsingh, son of Raja Udaikaran of Amber was awarded with the jagir of Barwada which later inherited by his son Mokal Singh. Mokal Singh captured Narayanpur from Sankhla Rajputs. He also built a fort 'Vekhagarh' at Amarsar in 16th century. After his death in 1445 AD, his son Rao Shekha expanded the territory of his state by annexing 360 villages of Jhanjha and founded the Shekha-Wati region after his name and made Amarsar its capital. Shekhawati region included the present districts of Sikar, Jhunjhunu and a part of Churu. He also captured Viratnagar along with Bairath and Mer. Shekhawats used to pay levy to Amber rulers but Rao Shekha stopped it. The audacious act of Shekha infuriated Maharaja Chandrasen who in turn attacked Amarsar. Rao Shekha sought help from Pathans and defeated Maharaja Chandrasen at Barwada in 1468. Later, both the states entered into peace treaty. Shekha built a fort Shikargarh on a hill, 3 km from Amarsar in 1477. He divided his kingdom amongst his twelve sons. Rao Shekha died in 1488. His eldest son Rao Raimal came to the throne at Amarsar.

Sikandar Lodhi launched an attack on Amarsar. Raimal sought military help from Amber and overthrew the Mughal army. Raimal along with his troops accompanied Rana Sanga in the battle of Khanwa in 1527. He granted his daughter Veeramdev of Mertia who got his daughter married to Lunkaran, the grandson of Raimal. He died in 1537.

Rao Suja (1537-49), son of Raimal ascended the throne at Amarsar. Shershah Suri captured Amarsar and Rao Suja to flee to Bansur in Alwar where he reorganized his forces

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with the help of his brothers Jagmal Singh and Tej Singh and recaptured Amarsar. He built temples and water reservoirs. When Mughal emperor sent Kakadbeg, Subedar of Alwar to conquer Amarsar, Rao Suja accepted the supremacy of Mughals. He had six sons. His eldest son Lunkaran (1549-84) acceded to the throne while his brothers were given jagir. He accompanied the Amber forces to Haldighati. He was appointed Fauzdar of Sambhar. He extended military help to Amber in the campaign on Gujarat in 1584 and died in the battle. Lunkaran had six sons – Manohardas, Narsinghdas, Nathadas, Bhagwandas, Sanwaldas and Bishandas. Manohardas (1584-1616) ascended the throne at Amarsar during the reign of Akbar. He joined the Mughal's conquest of Mewar during the reign of Jahangir. He founded the city Maul Manoharpur and shifted the capital to Manoharpur. He built a fort, *chhatris*, a temple dedicated to lord Vaman and Manohar pole at Bhatner fort. He died in 1616. Manohardas had three sons – Raichand, Prithvichand and Pratapchand. Pratapchand got the jagir of Chandwaji. Prithvichand (1616-28) came to the throne of Manoharpur as Raichand had already died fighting in Kabul. Prithvichand died in the battle of Kangra. Tirlokchand (1620-1655), son of Raichand seated on the throne of Manoharpur.

He was succeeded by his eldest son Anandchand (1656-86) and then Jagat Singh (1686-1702), grandson of Anandchand. Sakat Singh, son of Jagat Singh ascended the throne of Manoharpur followed by Jaswant Singh (1738-56) and his son Nathu Singh (1756-93). Nathu Singh had three sons – Bishan Singh, Prithvi Singh and Verisal Singh. Bishan Singh (1793-1810) came to the throne of Manoharpur while Prithvi Singh and Verisal got the jagir of Garh and Paldi respectively. Bishan Singh founded Shahpura and shifted the capital from Manoharpur to Shahpura where he built a fort. He also built Bishan Sagar and the fort of Bishangarh. He died childless. He adopted his nephew Hanuwant Singh, son of Prithvi Singh as his successor. He built garden and palace. He

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was succeeded by his grandson Rao Baldev Singh (1856-58). Shivnath Singh (1858-81) brother of Baldev Singh came to the throne as Shivnath died childless. Rao Pratap Singh (1881-1942) nephew of Shivnath Singh came to power at Shahpura. Pratap Singh had a son Kalyan Singh. Kalyan Singh had two sons - Dheer Singh and Laghuvir Singh. Kalyan Singh died early hence, Dheer Singh (1942-74) ruled till the country's independence. He was elected MLA from Viratnagar in 1967. He died in 1972.

Sikar

Thakur Rao Shiv Singh (1721-1748) son of Thakur Daulat Singh of Dadoj founded the Sikar city and built a fort on a hillock. He also built Gopinath temple. Rao Shiv Singh together with Jaipur army defeated Nawab Sardar Khan of Fatehpur in 1727 and captured its fort. He also fought battles for Jaipur state. He was succeeded by his son Smarth Singh who ruled from 1748 to 1754. Nahar Singh (1755-56) son of Smarth Singh came to the throne of Sikar. But he was removed by his uncle Chand Singh (1756-63) treacherously. Devi Singh (1763-95) son of Chand Singh occupied Ringas along with other villages. He built a hill fort, 10 km from Sikar and named it Devigarh. He also built a fort on the hill at Khoh and named it Raghunathgarh. Laxman Singh (1795-1833) became the ruler of Sikar after the death of Devi Singh. Laxman Singh assisted Jaipur army against Marathas who were extracting tributes from Kachhawa rulers. Maharaja Jai Singh of Jaipur got his daughter married to Laxman Singh. Laxman Singh attacked Nagaur and captured Deedwana. Raja Man Singh of Jodhpur after recapturing Deedwana laid siege to Shahpura fort defended by Mohabbat Singh. Laxman Singh sent a detachment to Shahpura which helped in uprooting the Jodhpur army from Shahpura in 1806. Laxman Singh captured Khandela fort from its ruler Hanuwant Singh in 1812.

Ram Pratap Singh (1833-50) seated on the throne of Sikar after the death of Laxman Singh. He was an efficient ruler. He

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maintained good relations with British government. He died in 1850. Bhairu Singh (1850-65), brother of Ram Pratap Singh became the ruler of Sikar as Ram Pratap died childless. He extended army help to British government during 1857 revolt. Bhairu Singh adopted Madho Singh (1866-1922) his successor. He built gardens, buildings, hospital, schools, roads etc. Kalyan Singh (1922-67) was also an efficient ruler. He undertook several development works.

Jhunjhunu

Raja Shardul Singh was shielded from the attack of Nawab Ruhel Khan by a Jat named Jhunjha. Raja Shardul Singh in token of appreciation named the place Jhunjhunu after Jhunjha. Shardul Singh subdued the Nawabs of Jhunjhunu and ruled over their state. He died in 1742. His son Jorawar Singh built a 12-pillared *chhatri* in the memory of his father in 1750 at Parsurampura. He built a fort Jorawargarh on the hill at Jhunjhunu. It was later completed by his son Bakht Singh. Bakht Singh was succeeded by his son Arjun Singh in 1755 who ruled till 1775. Thereafter, his son Jawani Singh (1775-1893) became the lord of Chaukri followed by Gopal Singh (1893-1940) and Ishwar Singh (1940).

Small Forts of Shekhawati

Fort of Data-Ramgarh, Sikar

Fort of Data-Ramgarh is situated on a moderate hillock in Ramgarh town of Sikar district in Rajasthan. It was built by Thakur Guman Singh in 1775 AD. The high and wide rampart of the fort consists of small and big bastions. The fort is accessed through three gateways. The main entrance is an arched gateway with strong doors studded with spikes. The fort houses palaces, temples, stable, wells and baoris. Shiv temple is located at the courtyard. The fort is in depleted condition. It is about 95 km from Jaipur.

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Fort of Khandela, Sikar

Khandela fort is situated on hilltop in Sikar district at a distance of 100 km from Jaipur. Khandela is a small fort and is in ruins. Nirvan Rajputs occupied the fort from Dahalia Rajputs in 1384 AD and founded the Khandela town. Shekhawats ruled over Khandela during 17th century. Rana Kumbha once invaded the fort. Khandela was divided between Udai Singh and Dheer Singh. Udai Singh built a small ground-level Udaigarh fort while Dheer Singh built 'Chhota Pana fort', also a ground-level fort. These forts are in depleted condition. Sikar is also known for magnificent havelis.

Fort of Fatehpur, Sikar

Fatehpur was ruled by Muslim Kayamkhani Nawabs during 15th century. They were subdued by Shekhawati rulers in 18th century. The fort of Fatehpur was built by Fateh Khan in 1451 AD. It is a small fort surrounded by 20 ft. wide moat overgrown with bushes. Its strong rampart 15-25 ft. thick and 20-50 ft. high consists of huge bastions at corners. The fort has an extensive court flanked by palaces representing Mughal-Rajput architecture. The palaces are built of yellow stone and carved exquisitely. The palace of Telin has projected balconies carved in floral pattern. Most of the mansions in the fort are in ruins. The site is 100 km from Jaipur.

Fort of Manpur, Lotwara, Sikar

The fort of Manpur was built by the Jagirdar of Lotwara in the name of Raja Man Singh of Amber in 17th century. Thakurs of Lotwara fought battles for Jaipur state. Lotwara is 110 km from Jaipur. The site is also famous for the largest baori in the world known as Abhaneri Chandbaori

Fort of Laxmangarh, Sikar

Rao Laxman Singh built the fort at Laxmangarh in 1862. It is 20 km from Fatehpur in Sikar district. It is a small fort erected on low eminence. The fort is now a private property.

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Fort of Bissau, Jhunjhunu

The fort of Bissau was built by Rao Kesari Singh in 1751 AD and named it Kesargarh. The fort is situated in Bissau town of Jhunjhunu district at a distance of 177 km from Jaipur. The rampart of the fort consists of seven huge round bastions, built by Rao Surajmal in 1773. The entrance is through high arched gateway with nail-studded doors. The fort houses Chandra Mahal, Sheesh Mahal, temples, wells and Vishnu Niwas. Jaipur army once attacked the fort but it resulted into peace treaty. Bissau town was also protected by a stone wall. The fort is now a private property.

Fort of Baghor, Khetri, Jhunjhunu

The fort of Baghor is perched on a high hill in the Khetri town of Jhunjhunu district. It is 7 km from Khetri and 140 km from Jaipur. The fort is said to have been built by two brothers Goga and Bagha of Tanwar clan of Rajput. The fort was assaulted by Muslim ruler Sultan Amir Khusro in 12th century AD. Nirvan Rajputs of Khandela overthrew the Sultan and occupied the fort. Later Bakhtawar Singh of Khetri snatched it from Khandela rulers. The fort is in ruins and deserted.

Fort of Bawai, Jhunjhunu

The fort of Bawai is situated in village Bawai of Jhunjhunu district. It is a ground level fort constructed by Balaji Nirvan of Papurana. The fort has strong rampart and bastions, surrounded by moat. Sawai Jai Singh-II of Jaipur captured Bawai and gave it to Dalel Singh. When Dalel Singh and his son died in the battle of Manwada-Madholi, Shekhawat recaptured Bawai. Presently, the fort is in depleted condition.

Fort of Badalgarh, Jhunjhunu

Badalgarh fort is situated on the hill in Jhunjhunu district. It was built by Kayamkhani Muslim, Nawab Fazal Khan and named it Fazalgarh in the 16th century. The fort was built for keeping horses. Its rampart consists of bastions on corners. Kayamkhani, originally being Rajput, originated from the

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conversion of Karamchand of Chauhan clan who had embraced Islam and his descendents came to be known as Kayamkhani. Kayamkhani Muslims were subdued by Rao Shardul Singh in 1730.

Fort of Nawalgarh, Jhunjhunu

Thakur Nawal Singh founded Nawalgarh town in 1737 AD and built a fort. The town was encircled by a strong wall consisting of four gateways with doors viz. Agoona Darwaja, Bawadi Darwaja, Mandi Darwaja and Nansa Darwaja. Nawalgarh is 39 km from the district headquarters Jhunjhunu. Nawalgarh is also known for fabulous havelis embellished with frescoes in Shekhawati style

Fort of Mukundgarh, Jhunjhunu

Thakur Mukund Singh built this fort in 1859 AD. The interior is embellished with frescoes in Shekhawati style. It is a ground-level fort, now converted into a heritage hotel with all modern amenities. Besides, there are some exquisite havelis like Ganeriwal, Kanoria, Saraf in Mukundgarh adorned with carved façade. The interior is decorated with murals depicting scenes from the life of Lord Krishan, nature etc.

Mandawa Fort, Jhunjhunu

The Mandawa Fort was built by Nawal Singh, a descendant of the Shekhawati rulers and founded Mandawa town in Jhunjhunu district. The fort is decorated with beautiful wall paintings depicting the scenes of Lord Krishna, royal procession, folks and the portraits of Rajput rulers. The mirror work on the walls enhances the beauty of the interior. The Mandawa Fort has now been developed as a heritage hotel. It is located 170 kms from Jaipur and 15 kms from the Jhunjhunu city.

Fort of Bhupalgarh, Khetri, Jhunjhunu

Bhupal Singh built Bhupalgarh on a hill at an altitude of 2337 ft. above sea level in Khetri town of Jhunjhunu in 1755.

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Fort of Churu

The fort of Churu was built by Thakur Kushal Singh in 1715 AD. The fort's strong rampart consists of solid bastions. It houses palaces, temples, stable and wells. The façade stands erected while the inner mansions are in depleted condition. The fort is accessed through an arched gateway. The site is 200 km from Jaipur. Thakur Maldeo had founded the Churu town. Maharaja Surat Singh of Bikaner attacked Churu in 1814 and defeated its possessor Thakur Shivji Singh who later committed suicide.

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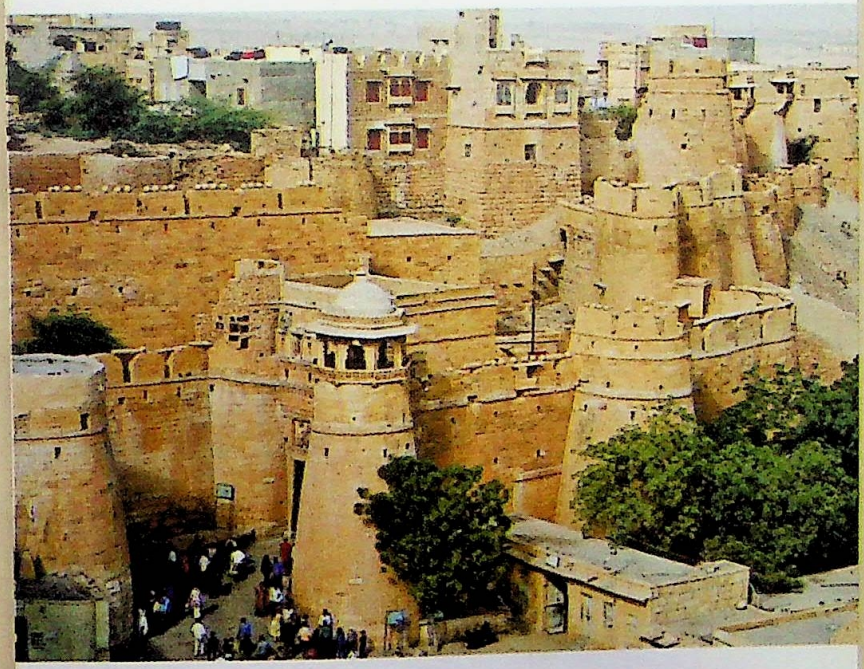
1. Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur



2. Jaisalmer Fort, Jaisalmer

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3. Junagarh Fort, Bikaner

4. Phool Mahal, Mehrangarh

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5. Ceiling Phool Mahal, Mehranghar

6. Cannons atop Mehrangarh

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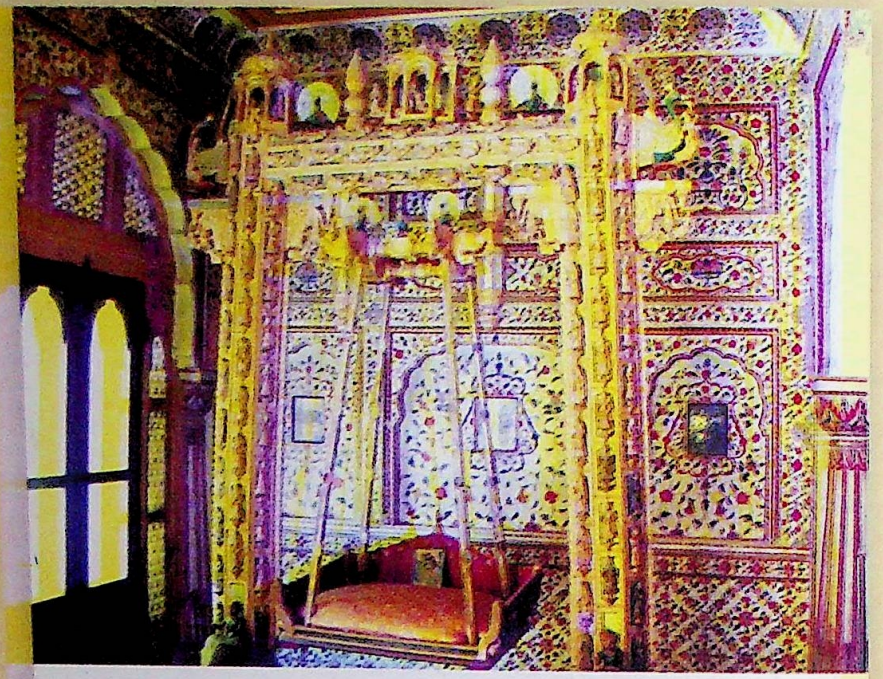
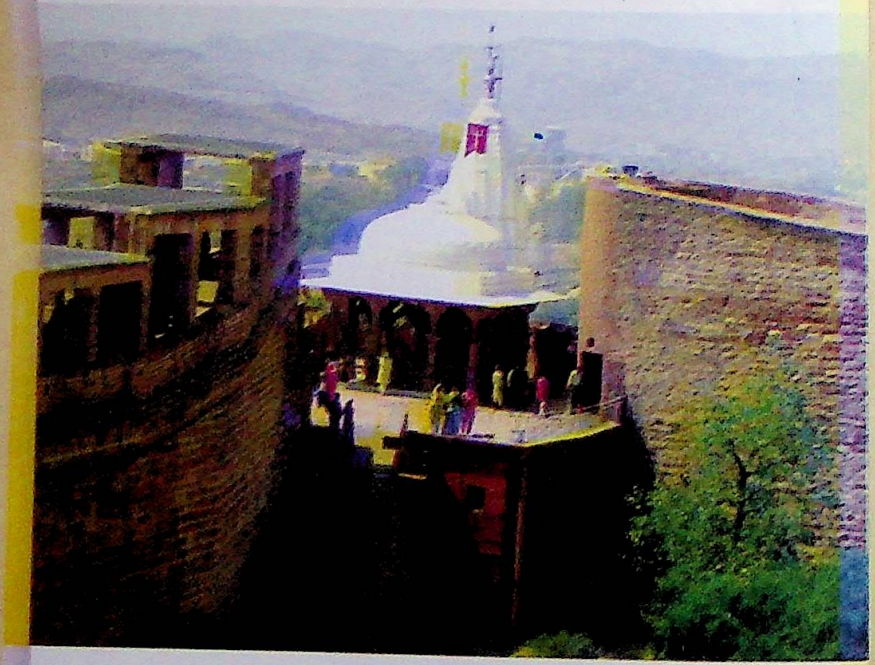


11. Swing in Gajmandir, Junagarh



12. Chamunda Devi Temple, Mehrangarh

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13. Vijay Stambh, Chittaurgarh Fort

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14. Kirti Stambh, Chittaurgarh Fort

15. Padmini Palace, Chittaurgarh Fort

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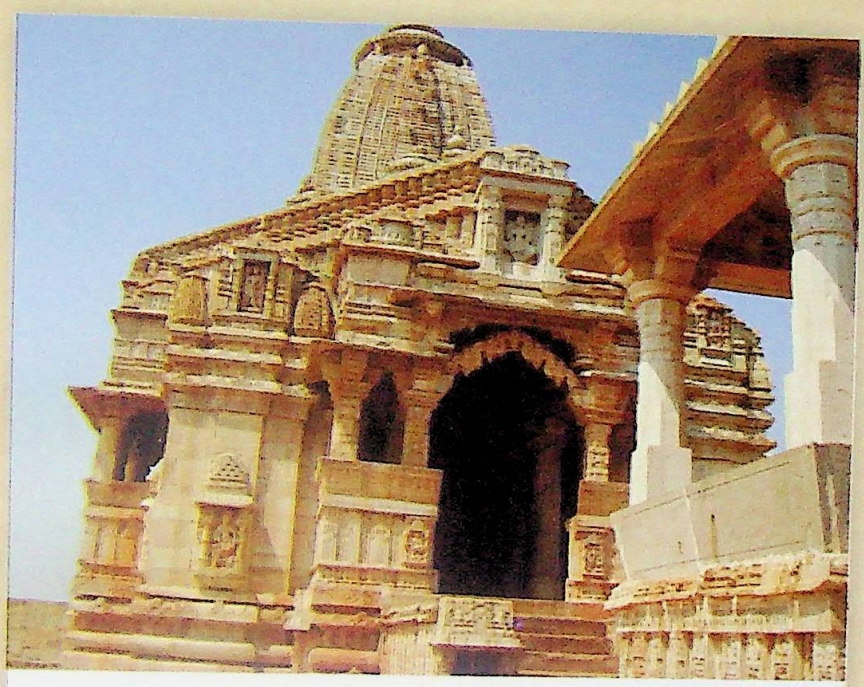

16. Kumbh Shyam Temple, Chittaurgarh Fort

17. Shiv Temple, Chittaurgarh Fort

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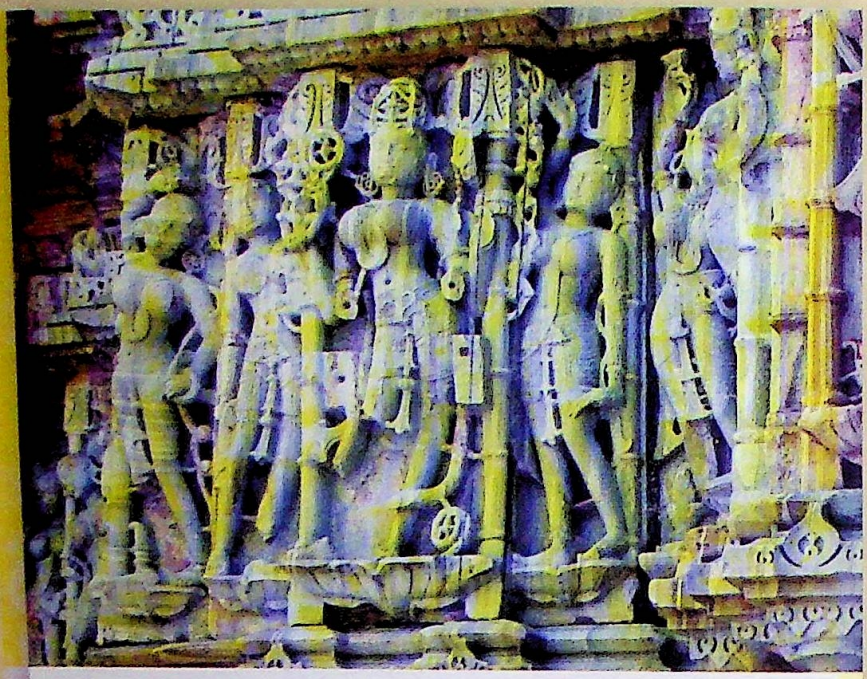

18. Sculptures on Temple walls, Chittaurgarh Fort

19. Rana Pratap and Raja Man Singh, Haldighati Museum, Udaipur

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20. Chetak Chabutra, Haldighati, Udaipur

21. City Palace, Udaipur

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22. View from Sajjangarh, Udaipur

23. Gau Mukh Pond, Chittaurgarh Fort

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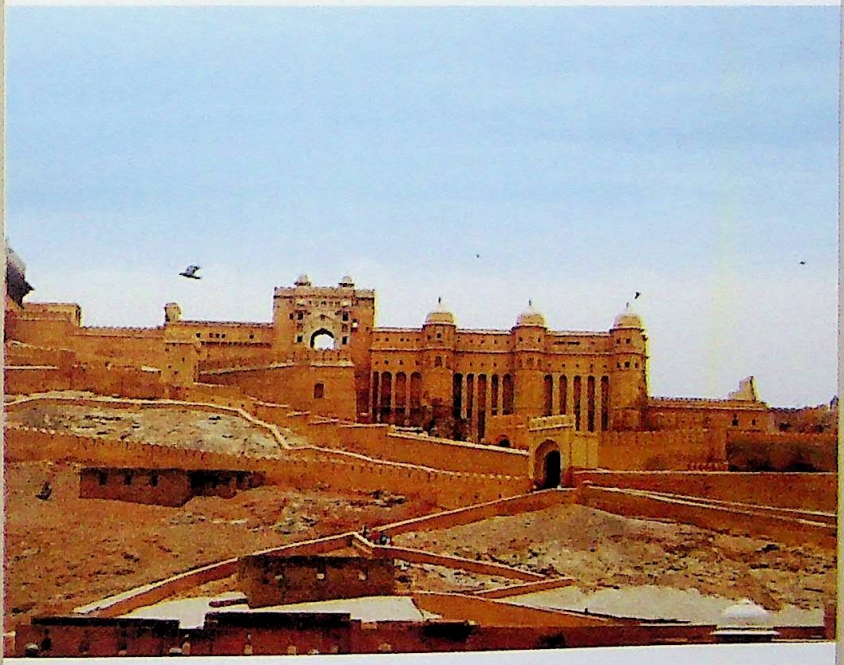
24. Jaigarh Fort, Jaipur



25. Amber Palace, Jaipur

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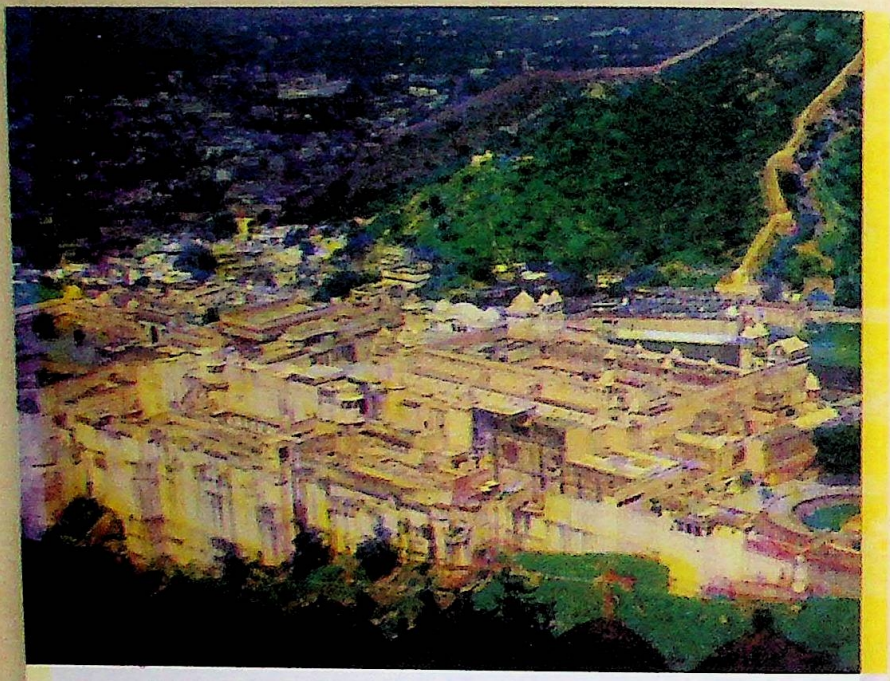

26. Overview of Amber Palace from Jaigarh Fort

27. Ceiling of Sheesh Mahal, Amber Palace

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28. Chandra Mahal, City Palace, Jaipur

29. Ganesh pole, Amber Palace, Jaipur

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30. Mubarak Mahal, City Palace, Jaipur

31. Silver Jar, City Palace, Jaipur

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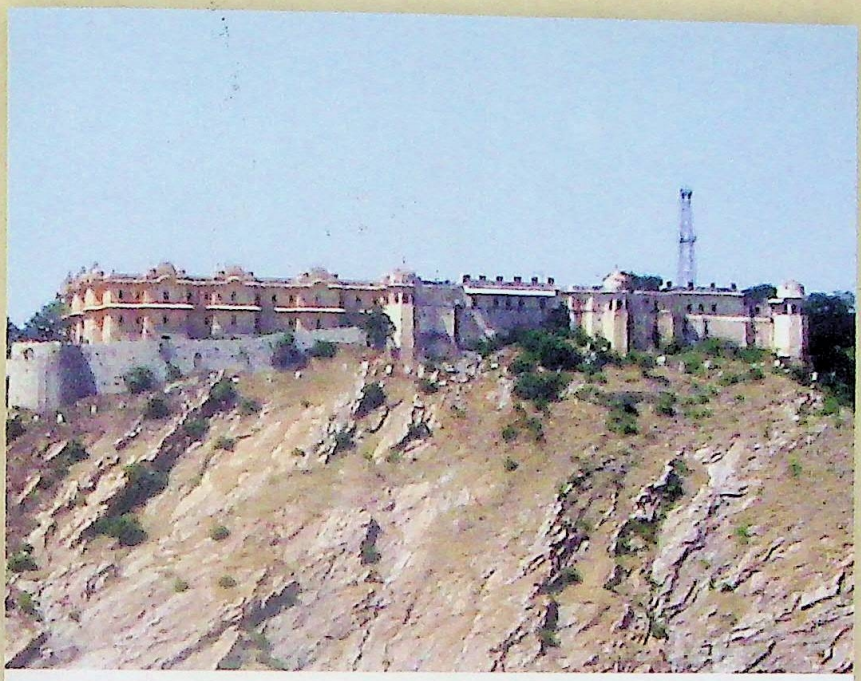

32. Nahargarh Fort, Jaipur

33. Hawa Mahal, Jaipur

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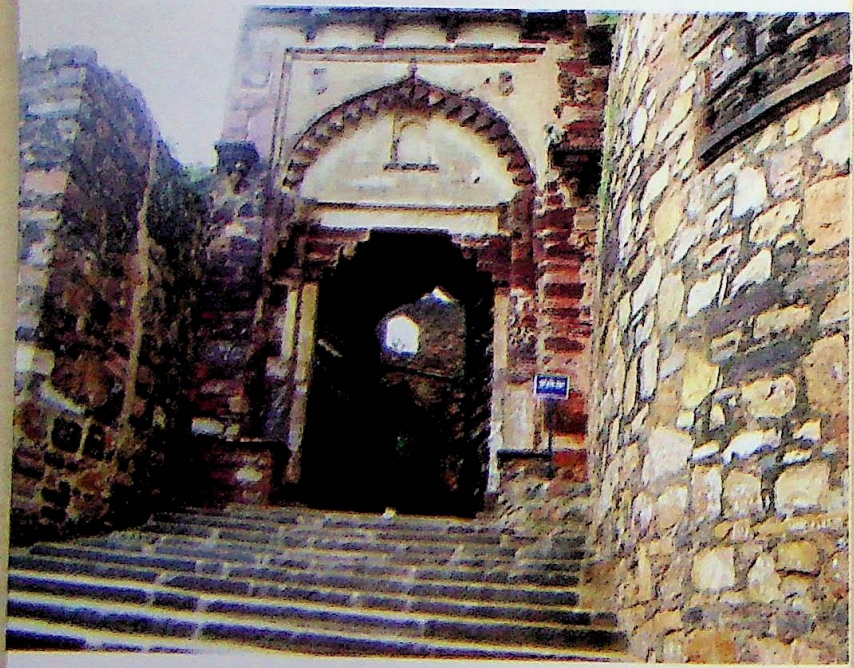
34. Ruins of Taragarh, Ajmer and Dargah of Meeran Sahib in White



35. Andheri Gate, Ranthambhor Fort, Sawai Madhopur

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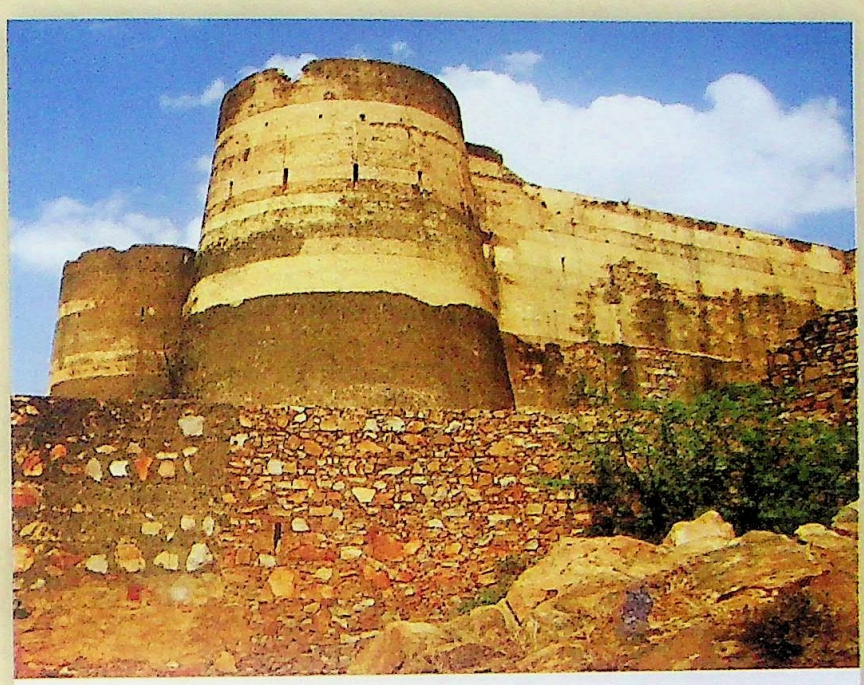

36. Fort of Achrol, Jaipur

37. Jal Mahal, Jaipur

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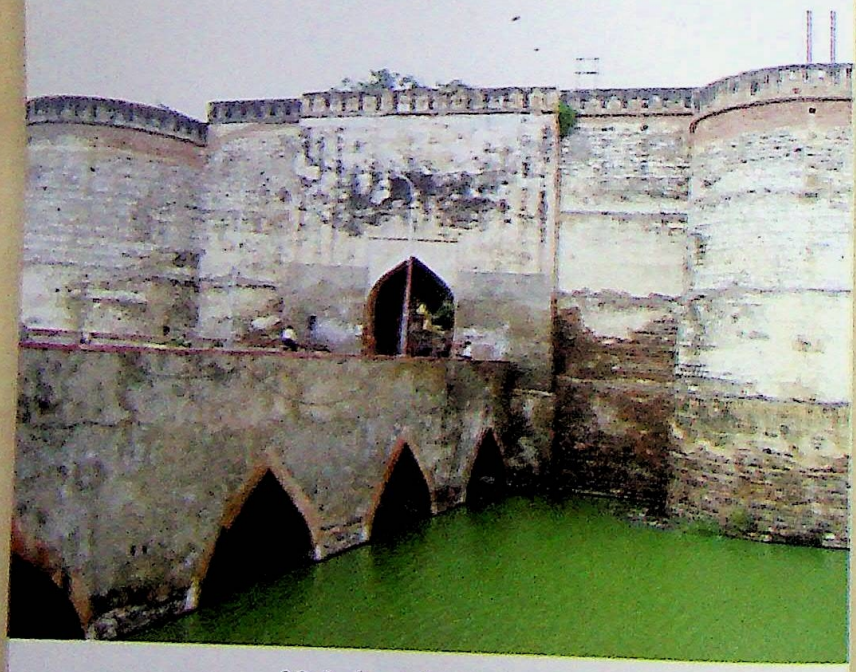
38. Moti Dungri, Jaipur



39. Lohagarh, Bharatpur

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40. Deeg Palace, Deeg (Bharatpur)

41. Deeg Fort, Deeg (Bharatpur)

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42. Fort of Alwar

43. City Palace, Alwar

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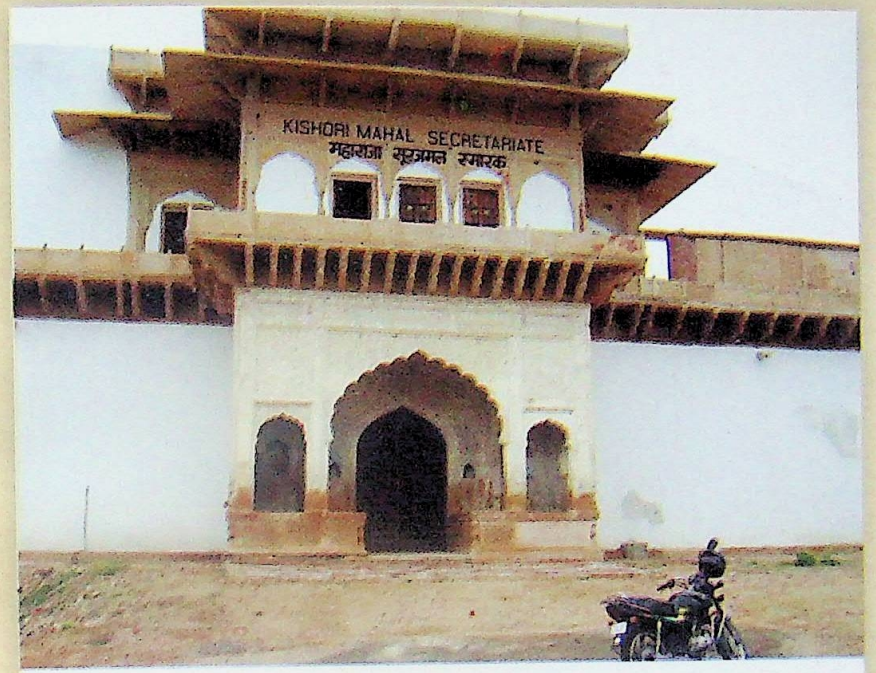

44. Kishori Mahal Secretariate, Bharatpur

45. Baradari, Deeg Palace, Bharatpur

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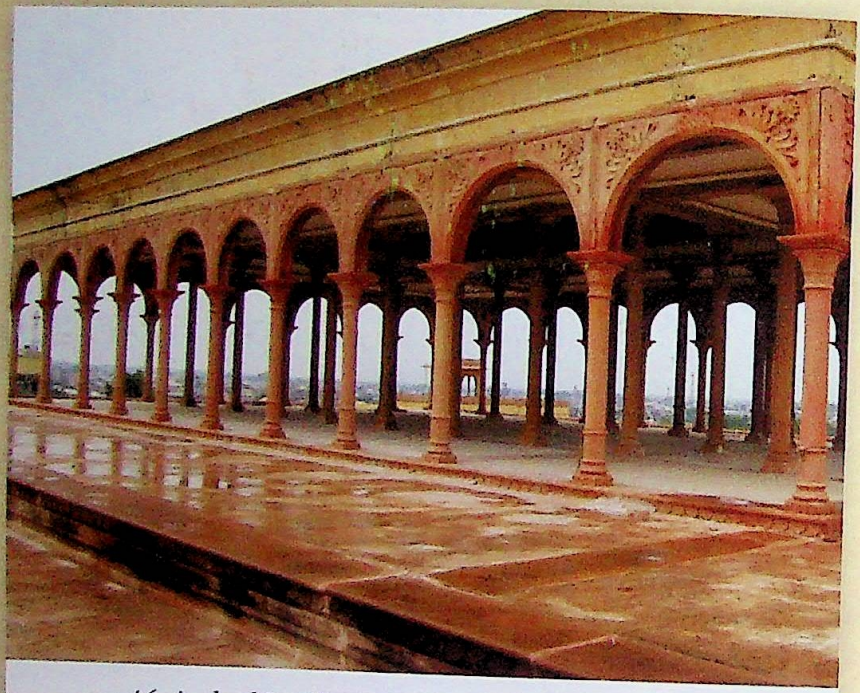

46. Arched Pavilion atop Durbar Hall, Lohagarh

47. Jawahar Burj, Lohagarh

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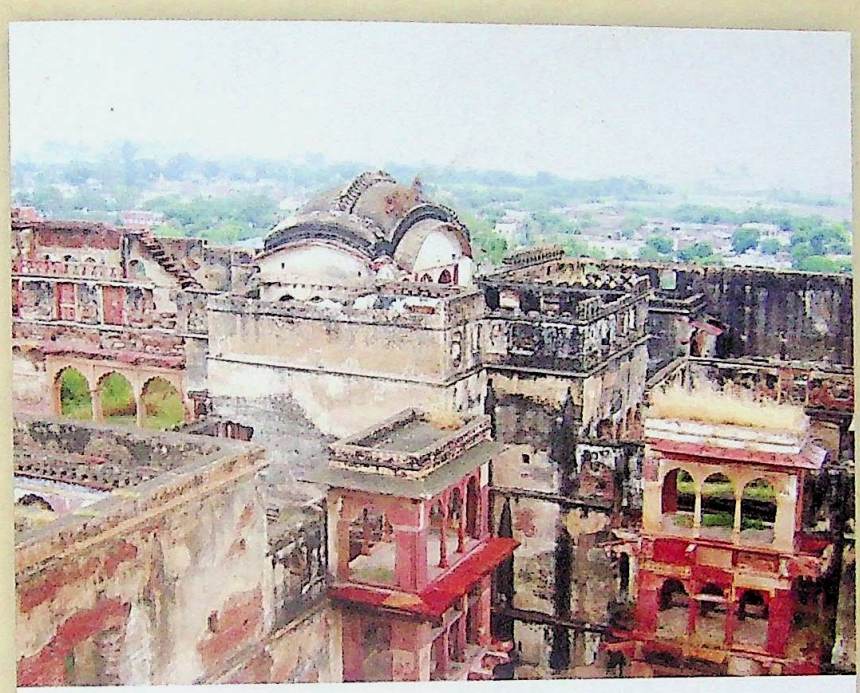
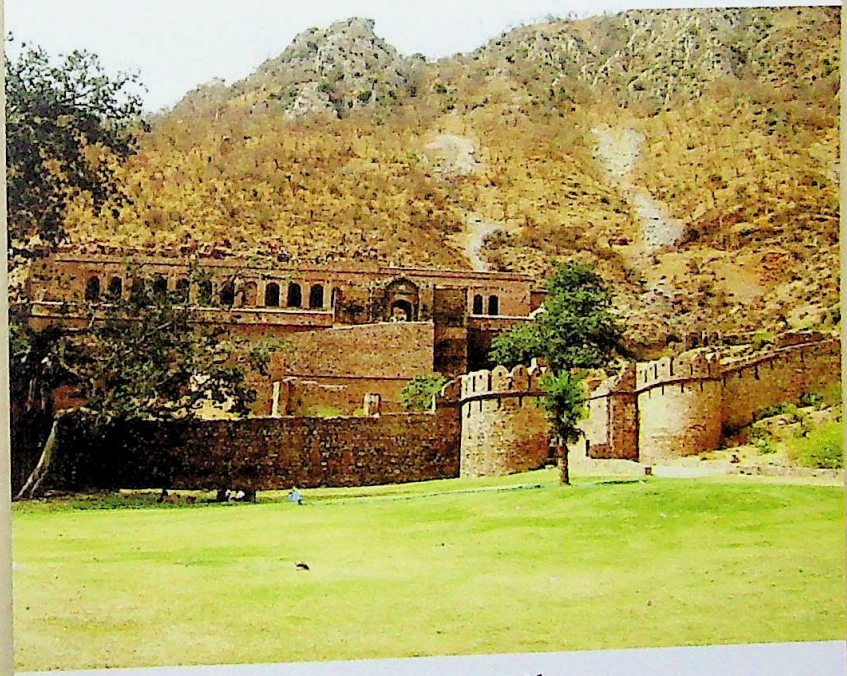


48. Kumher Palace, Bharatpur



49. Bhangarh Fort, Alwar

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50. Ajabgarh Fort, Alwar

51. Taragarh Fort (Front View), Bundi

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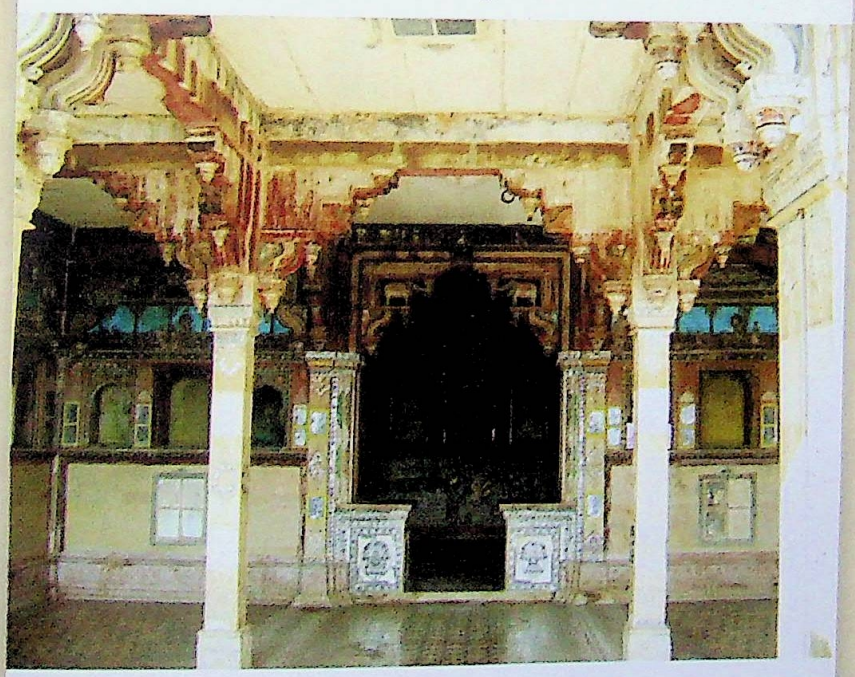
52. Murals in Taragarh, Bundi



53. Phool Mahal, Taragarh, Bundi

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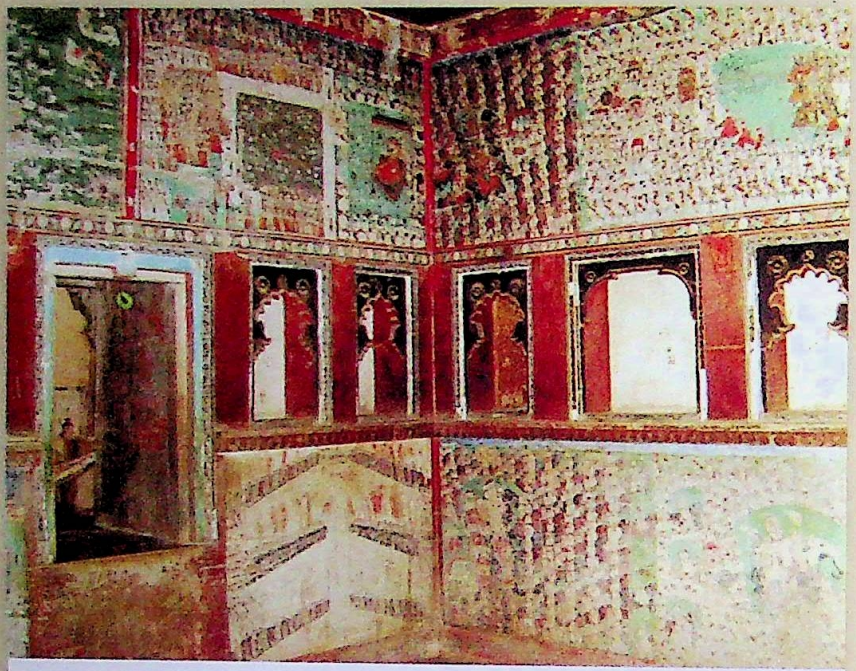

54. Murals in Phool Mahal, Taragarh, Bundi

55. Double floral base, Taragarh, Bundi

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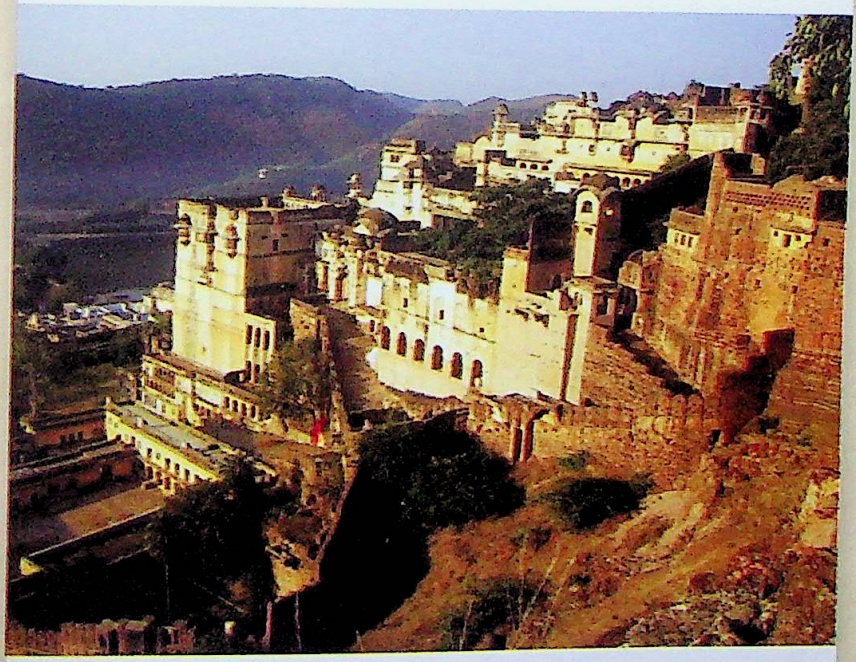
56. Baori in Taragarh Fort, Bundi



57. Taragarh (Overview), Bundi

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58. Fort of Kota, Kota

59. Jagmandir, Kota

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60. Badalgarh Fort, Jhunjhunu

61. Laxmangarh Fort, Sikar

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62. Nawalgarh, Jhunjhunu

63. Khetri Fort, Jhunjhunu

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